China in Transformation

A·R·COLQUHOUN

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LI HUNG CHANG AND THE AUTHOR DISCUSSING AFFAIRS

DRAWN FROM LIFE BY W. HATHERELL, R.I.

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CHINA

IN TRANSFORMATION

BY

ARCHIBALD R. COLQUHOUN

GOLD MEDALLIST, ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY; FORMERLY DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, BURMA, ADMINISTRATOR OF MASHONALAND, AND SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT OF THE "TIMES" IN THE FAR EAST, ETC.

WITH FRONTISPIECE, MAPS AND DIAGRAMS

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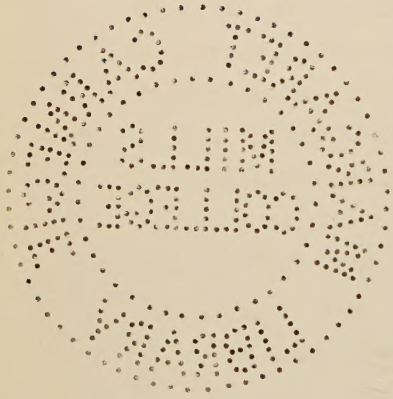

INTRODUCTION

RECENT events in the Far East have drawn the attention of the world to the condition and prospects of China. The problems which are in course of solution there, and the forces which are at work on them, are exciting an unprecedented interest throughout Europe and America. The moment seems opportune, therefore, for putting on record some results of the writer's observations during several prolonged visits to the Far East, a task which he has, for some time, had in contemplation. The work is strictly limited in scope to such an account of the actual China as may interest the general reader, and be helpful to men of business, politicians, travellers, and others who may wish to be further informed regarding China. It makes no kind of pretension to be a book for the student. The history, the literature, the religions, and the manners and customs of the Chinese are treated of in many works of various degrees of merit, accessible to all readers. A few indications of the sources of

information on some of these subjects will be found scattered over the following pages, but only so far as is necessary to render the actual situation generally intelligible.

Such, then, being the purpose of the book, it will be for the public to pronounce on the success of the attempt. But, whatever may be their verdict, it seems incumbent on me to explain that the task has not been undertaken without reasonable qualifications and adequate preparation. Indeed, I may claim to have enjoyed in my life's training some exceptional advantages for work of this kind, both in the way of observing, and of correcting deductions by comparison with the conditions of other and different countries.

Many years of service in Burma, first as an engineer, and later as Deputy-Commissioner; repeated visits to Siam, the latter on a Government mission and in a private capacity; prolonged stays in China as explorer, special correspondent of the *Times*, and, recently, in connection with important negotiations concerning railway questions—such, briefly, have been my qualifications in the Far East. Nor has my experience been limited to Eastern Asia. As the first Administrator of Mashonaland, where I had to deal with the work of colony-making, and on a special mission to

examine the Nicaragua Canal scheme, and in visits to the United States and Canada, I may claim, and not merely as a student, but as a man of affairs, to have prepared myself for forming a judgment upon the events which are passing in the Far East; for a writer on the Far Eastern problem should also have made a study of the West. In the East it has always been my special aim to draw upon the best sources of information, and it has been my privilege to have personally known Rawlinson and Yule, Alcock and Parkes, Baber and others, while it has also been my good fortune to have been aided in the preparation of this work by advice from various friends. It will not, therefore, be for lack of opportunities if I have failed to give to the reader a fair representation of the state of China, as it now stands in its relation to the Powers of the world.

The grand international problem presented by the affairs of China has been approached and treated from the point of view of the English-speaking and Teutonic races, because there is an obvious community of interest as well as community of sentiment among them, which may be expected, in the long run, to constitute a permanent factor in the world's affairs. But I have endeavoured to deal with facts and probabilities dispassionately, avoiding inter-

national recriminations, which are entirely out of place in serious discussions. The movements which are in progress in the Far East are of the gravest import, and I have not been able to resist the conviction that the immediate destinies of mankind are, to a considerable extent, dependent on the issue of these movements. And, although no race question be directly involved, one can scarcely avoid grouping the Powers in combinations which will ultimately place the Teutonic peoples on the one side and the Slav-Latin on the other. This would leave Japan as a mediating factor of great influence in the evolution of the Pacific States. The onward march of Russia cannot be stopped, even by her own rulers, unless it encounters a solid barrier, while the unchecked advance of that Power seems certain to confer on her the mastery of the world. Such is the general conclusion suggested by the evidence set forth in this volume, on which every reader can form his own judgment.

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CHINA

IN TRANSFORMATION

CHAPTER I

THE GEOGRAPHICAL QUESTION

The Chinese Empire comprised till lately: China Proper—composed of eighteen provinces—Manchuria, Mongolia, Ili, Tibet, Kashgaria or Chinese Turkestan, and Corea.

It extended over 60° of longitude and 40° of latitude. The total area was some four and a half million square miles, and the eighteen provinces of China Proper, including the islands of Hainan and Formosa, constituted about one-third of the whole Empire, containing, however, eleven-twelfths of the total population and most of the wealth of the country, the Central Asian dominions forming a very serious burden on the Chinese exchequer. Not very long ago the country as far north as the Yablonoi Mountains belonged to China. In 1858 a large slice of territory—namely, the Amur Province, situated between the Yablonoi Mountains

on the north and the Amur River on the south—passed into Russian hands, followed, in 1860, by a large and most valuable region, the Maritime or Coast Province.

The enormous tracts lying outside China Proper, still almost *terræ incognitæ*, are, excepting always Manchuria, beyond the radius of profitable commercial intercourse for England. Tibet, when opened up, must be approached through India. It can and should be done; but if we delay, Tibet will be occupied by the Russians, crossing the Kirghis highlands, the necessary steps having already been taken for the purpose. The hill districts of Koko-nor, the Gobi Desert, and Mongolia are all unsuited for advantageous trade relations. These table and high lands are in great part hill and desert, poor and sparsely peopled; where fertile and moderately inhabited, they are too distant. But they have a great strategical importance. Manchuria is now for all practical purposes Russian; Mongolia, Ili, and Kashgaria are the Tsar's whenever he chooses to stretch out his hand for them. Corea no longer belongs to China, and, whatever her destinies may be, will never again be ruled by the "Son of Heaven."

But we are dealing with the China of to-day, and therefore the region which interests us in our present examination is comprised by the eighteen provinces of China Proper. These are Chihli, Shansi, and Shensi on the north; Yunnan and Kweichau on the south-west; Kwangtung and Kwangsi in the south; Kansu and Szechuan on the west; Shantung,

Kiangsu, Chekiang, and Fukien on the east; and Honan, Anhwei, Hupei, Hunan, and Kiangsi in the centre. China Proper, speaking roughly, is bounded on the east by the Yellow and China Seas, reaching from Corea to the Tongking Gulf; on the west by Kokonor and Tibet; on the south by Tongking and the Shan States; and on the north by Mongolia and Russia. The principal islands still remaining to China, of the hundreds which fringe the coast, are Chusan and Hainan.

The area of China Proper measures about 1,500,000 square miles, being about half the size of Europe, seven times that of France, and seventeen times that of Great Britain. Each of the eighteen provinces, therefore, is, on an average, almost as large as our own country. Though not so densely peopled as at one time supposed—mistaken estimates having been circulated by those who had not penetrated the country away from seaboard or river—it is yet thickly populated.

Victor Cousin has said, "Tell me the geography of a country and I will tell you its future." For either theoretical or practical purposes a knowledge of the topography of a country is a necessity, and its practical value is at once apparent whenever an attempt is made at laying down a system of communications, either by road or rail, or when some serious political question is under examination. Maps of China are to this day to be found on which are projected systems of railways carried across quite impracticable ground, in ludicrous defiance of

mountain systems and other obstacles. Our political geography, too, seems to be quite as much at fault. The physical characteristics are as yet but imperfectly understood, both in Europe and China, though the Jesuit surveys,* the narratives of many recent travellers, and especially the masterly studies of Richthofen, have done much to make the European geographer, if not the general public, acquainted with the subject. In China Proper itself, dismissing the more or less savage tracts forming a fringe to the west and north, there still remains a vast Empire of most varied character. The chief physical characteristic of China is that, in the region north of the Yangtsze, it is divided into two almost equal sections, at the 110th degree of longitude, representing, roughly, the level and mountainous country. South of the Yangtsze, the interior is shut off from the sea, as regards trade purposes, by what may be termed a palisade of very broken hills running generally parallel to the seaboard. The main features of China include high tablelands, broken mountainous country, rivers breaking through stupendous ranges, and the deltas of the Pei ho, the Yellow, the Yangtsze, and the Si kiang (or West) rivers. Looking at the map, it will be seen that the whole country, with the exception of the Great Plain and the

* In 1708 the Jesuits made a survey of the great wall for Kanghi, in 1709 they made a map of Manchuria, in 1711 one of Shantung, and by the end of 1717 they had completed a map of the whole Empire. A few years later they surveyed Tibet, and the maps prepared by them are practically those still in use to-day.

deltas, is divided into a number of compartments, each of these being cased in by impounding hills. The gorges, by means of which the drainage is carried through these enclosing ranges, form a marked and imposing feature in the character of the hill country.

A few words are necessary regarding the general mountain system of China. Knowing, however, that, though "geography is good, brevity is better," I shall be brief. The ranges that penetrate the region south of latitude 45° N. may be said to have their nucleus in the Pamir plateau, the "Roof of the World." From this plateau extend the Tian Shan, or Celestial Mountains, separating Mongolia from Chinese Turkestan and the Gobi Desert. To the south of the Tian Shan the Kuenlun range takes its exit, and, proceeding due east, separates Chinese Turkestan, the desert of Gobi and Kokonor from Tibet, ultimately striking the Yungling Mountains near 104° E. At the south-east corner of the Pamirs a huge range leaves the plateau, and, joining the Kuenlun with a cross spur, forms the western border of the central Tibetan tableland; thence, making a great curve, it continues as a barrier round the southern and eastern sides of the high plateau, until it joins the Kuenlun about 95° E. Under the name of the Himalaya it separates that portion of Tibet drained by the Sanpo or Bramaputra from India, some of its peaks being 30,000 feet in height. East of Assam it is broken through by the Bramaputra. Continuing in an

easterly direction, it throws out a huge arm southwards, which forms, with its plateau and mountain ranges, the primary base of Indo-China. This arm is cleft lengthwise by the Salween and Mekong rivers, and partly in its length and in part transversely by the Yangtsze and its branches. The Irrawaddy rises in its western armpit; the Si kiang (West River) and the Song koi (Red River) in its eastern one. The main range then continues in a north-north-east direction, and, under the name of the Yungling, impinges on the Bayan Kara, which springs in 95° E., 35° N. from the eastern flank of the hill barrier that encloses the central Tibetan tableland. Running nearly due east, and known on most European maps (but only there, as Richthofen has shown, for "ling" is applied in China only to a mountain pass) as the Pehling and Tsingling ranges, it forms the water parting between the Yangtsze and Yellow River systems. The mountainous belt of the south-eastern provinces forms the northern watershed of the Canton River, and is the divide between it and the Yangtsze system. All the ranges which penetrate China Proper, with the exception of the mountains of Shantung, jutting out south of the Gulf of Pechili, are connected with the western Tibetan system. The average heights of the western China highlands may be roughly given as follows: the Pamir plateau, 15,000 feet; Tibet, 15,000 feet; Kokonor, 10,500 feet; the Mongolian plain, 4000 feet; the Shansi tableland, 3000 feet to 6000 feet; Yunnan, 5000 feet to 7000 feet.

The chief rivers of China, from south to north, are:

The Si kiang (or West River) and its tributaries; the Ta kiang (Yang-tsze)* and its affluent, the Han; the Hoang ho, or Yellow River, called "China's sorrow," and the Pei ho. The Min kiang in Fukien and the Tsien Tang kiang in Chekiang may also be mentioned, but they are of quite minor importance.

Regarding the rivers of western China draining southwards, such as the Salween and the Mekong or Cambodia, nothing need be said here. They are all mighty in dimension, but quite unnavigable, and therefore do not come within the present discussion. Of the Chinese rivers, the Yangtsze is indisputably the most important, being the main artery, indeed the only real channel for trade, between eastern and western China. It has a navigable length of about 1600 miles, of which the 600 between Shanghai and Hankau are now traversed by large sea-going and river-steamers, while Ichang, some 360 miles beyond, is regularly reached by light-draught vessels, and Chungking, another 360 miles farther on, has been proved to come within the navigation limit. Indeed, according to Hosie, the obstacles that exist lie between Ichang and the Szechuan frontier, a distance of about one hundred miles; all beyond that being plain sailing, not only as far as Chungking,

* The Yangtsze kiang, usually called by the Chinese the Ta kiang (great river) or Kiang (river), is the "Quian" of Marco Polo. Like other rivers in China, it bears different names in different parts of its course, the name Yangtsze being properly applied only to its lower reaches.

but even to Sui fu, some 200 miles farther west. But of the Yangtsze I shall have more to say hereafter.

The Hoang ho, the river of northern China, which has so often, and with such terrible results, shifted its mouth, (since 600 B.C., nine times), may be said to be nearly unnavigable. The amount of silt brought down by it is encroaching on the sea at the rate of 100 feet annually. The basin of the Pei ho is formed by a number of streams, flowing mostly in independent channels to within a short distance of the coast, where they converge towards the treaty port of Tientsin. For purposes of navigation it is only practicable for light-draught boats. Surveys and travels have enabled us to clearly estimate the value of the Si kiang River,* which traverses the entire provinces of Kwangsi and Kwangtung and part of Yunnan. Information regarding this waterway will be found elsewhere, but, briefly, the river can be ascended some 350 miles by light-draught steamers, more than half the distance from Canton to the navigation limit. On the upper portion junks can travel 250 miles to the borders of Yunnan. The importance of this river to China and the advisability of opening it effectively need not be dilated on here.

The peculiarities of Chinese nomenclature are remarkable. No river or chain of mountains, as Reclus points out, has the same denomination throughout its length; no town even keeps its primitive name

* Explored and mapped by the author in 1882.

from one dynasty to another. "There is no national term to designate China itself, or its inhabitants," he says; "every one of the names in common use at different periods has kept its former meaning and can be replaced by synonyms; not one has yet been transformed by use into a purely geographical appellation. It is the same with the names of mountains, rivers, provinces, and towns; these names are only epithets—descriptive, historical, military, or poetical—changing with each *régime* and replaced at will by other epithets."

The population of China Proper has so suffered from insurrections, famines, and their usual accompaniment, pestilence, that it is now generally allowed to comprise no more than 350,000,000. Indeed, some believe it to be not more populous than India, and, as it is about the same size, they assume the population to be under 300,000,000. Knowing both India and China well, I am inclined to believe that 350,000,000 will be found no extravagant estimate.*

* The population in 1887 was estimated at 383,138,000, Szechuan alone containing 73,178,000, equal to 295 inhabitants to the square mile. At various periods the population has been estimated as follows:—

Père Amiot . . .	1743 ...	150,265,475
Lord Macartney . .	1792 ...	333,000,000
Official Census . . .	1813 ...	360,279,897
Sacharoff	1842 ...	413,686,994
Vassilivitch . . .	1868 ...	404,946,514
Chinese Customs Reports	1881 ...	380,000,000

Any statistics based upon the census of 1842, so often quoted, must be erroneous, on account of the devastating rebellions and terrible famines which have occurred since then.

This amount of population at first sight seems a large one, but it is only twelve times that of

THE DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIONS IN ASIA.

England, while the area which supports it is thirty times greater. The extent of population, therefore, is not excessive, but, as noted by Wingrove Cook, its distribution is most remarkable. The pressure upon the eastern seaboard and on the great water-

ways, where they open out into valleys and deltas, is unparalleled elsewhere. Away from these the population diminishes rapidly. The most populous provinces have as much, it is believed, as 800 per square mile, the average being 270. The most thinly populated provinces are Kwangsi, Kweichau and Yunnan. The latter, which, before the Mohammedan rebellion, counted some 16,000,000 inhabitants, has now only some 6,000,000, giving 50 to the square mile. The eastern part of Szechuan is very populous; but the west, abutting on Tibet, is mountainous and poorly peopled. The density of the population will be found to be in some degree an index—but by no means an accurate one, owing to the defective communications—to the agricultural capabilities of the country. We may take half the area of the eighteen provinces—that is, 650,000 square miles, or 400,000,000 of acres—as being land cultivated and capable of bearing good crops.

The metropolitan province of Chihli, with an area of about 57,000 square miles, and a population of probably 36,000,000, is the most northern portion of the Great (delta) Plain, with the exception of the ranges defining its northern and western frontiers. On the east it is bordered by the Gulf of Pechihli and Shantung, on the south by Shantung and Honan, on the west by Shansi, and on the north by Inner Mongolia and Liaotung. This province contains the present capital, Peking, and the chief northern treaty port, Tientsin, on the Pei ho.

The province of Shansi—the original seat of the Chinese people—is bounded on the north by Mongolia, on the east by Chihli, on the south by Honan, and on the west by Shensi. It occupies an area of 66,000 square miles, and contains besides its capital, Taiyuen fu, eight prefectural cities. The population is returned as being 17,000,000. The configuration of Shansi is noteworthy, its southern portion, including the region down to the Yellow River—in all an area of about 30,000 square miles—forming a plateau elevated from 5000 to 6000 feet above the level of the sea, the whole being one vast coal-field. In agricultural products the province is poor, and, as the means of transport at present existing are rude and insufficient, it is liable to famine, and even in good years grows food-stuffs sufficient for its own wants only.

The province of Shensi is bounded on the north by the Great Wall, on the west by the province of Kansu, on the south by the province of Szechuan, and on the east by Shansi, from which it is separated by the Yellow River. It contains an area of some 80,000 square miles, and its population was said to number upwards of 10,000,000 before the outbreak of the Mohammedan rebellion of 1860–1875. Its capital, Sian, is next to Peking in importance, and enjoys the distinction of having been the capital of the Empire for a longer period than any other city. The Wei basin,* in Shensi, is the greatest agricul-

* The cause of the vitality of the Wei basin, remarks Richthofen, is that "Singan-fu (Sian) occupies a dominant position, such as few

tural region of the north-west, and on this account, as well as its geographical position, has played a prominent part in the history of China, especially in its early epochs.* It is well termed by Colonel Mark Bell the centre of gravity and resistance of Mid-China. Cut off from the rest of China by the Yellow River and its bordering mountainous region to the eastward, and the Tsingling shan range to the southward, the Taiping rebellion never was able to cross from the south into northern Shensi, nor did the Mohammedan rebellion of Kansu and Shensi ever spread southward. As regards products and commercial intercourse, the two districts have been also widely divided. The importance of the region to China is evident. Railway connection with the eastern provinces is a necessity, for it requires no special insight to see that China is open to attack from Central Asia by the very road which she, in the past, herself always followed in her invasions.

inland cities enjoy that are not built at the places of confluence of navigable rivers. It is situated at the confluence of those few roads of traffic which are the only possible connections for mediating the intercourse between the Wei basin and the eastern and northern provinces, and occupy, therefore, indeed, in some measure, the place of rivers."

* The antiquarian finds, says Richthofen, nowhere in China such opportunity for collecting objects of interest as on the classical soil of the Wei basin. At a comparatively recent epoch of Chinese history, during the Tang dynasty, arts and sciences flourished at the Court of Chang-ngan, the present Sian fu. Dr. W. Williams says of this celebrated line of princes: "During the 287 years they held the throne, China was probably the most civilised country on earth, and the darkest days of the West formed the brightest era of the East."

The province of Yunnan lies in the extreme south-west of the Empire, its southern and western borders forming the northern frontiers of Tongking and Burma respectively. On the north it is bordered by Szechuan, and on the east by Kweichau and Kwangsi. It is the third largest province of the Empire, its area measuring 122,000 square miles, but, as elsewhere remarked, owing to the devastatations of the Mohammedan rebellion and ensuing plague, its population has been greatly reduced, and now is not more than 6,000,000. Yet its mineral wealth is greater and more varied than that of any other province. Its capital is Yunnan, between which town and Burma a considerable trade is carried on.

The other south-west province, Kweichau, is the poorest of the eighteen in agricultural products, but in minerals it is nearly as rich as Yunnan. The population is about the same as that of Yunnan, in an area of 64,000 square miles. The means of communication, however, are so defective, that its resources have hitherto been almost undeveloped.

The province of Kwangtung lies between Kiangsi and Hunan on the north, Fukien on the north-east, Kwangsi on the west, and the ocean on the south. Its area is over 90,000 square miles, with a popula- numbering 20,000,000. Its capital is Canton, on the Pearl River, the largest town in China and the one best known to the West, as for a long time it was the only place to which foreigners were allowed access, and is easily visited by the

itinerant traveller from Hongkong, while *en route* to Japan. The natural facilities of the province for internal navigation and an extensive coasting trade are considerable, its long line of littoral affording many excellent harbours, and its waterways, the West River and its affluents, radiating into the districts in the west and north, even beyond the provincial frontiers.

The province of Kwangsi extends westwards of Kwangtung to the border of Tongking, and has an area of over 80,000 square miles and a population of 8,000,000. Both Kwangsi and Kwangtung are fairly well watered by the West River and its tributaries, and intercourse is easy. Wuchau and Nanning, on the West River, are the largest trading towns in the province.

The province of Kansu projects like a wedge into the Tibetan plateau, and is the largest of the eighteen provinces, measuring 260,000 square miles, with a population of some 20,000,000. Its importance politically is very great, as it commands the highway between Central Asia and China Proper.

The province of Szechuan, treated fully elsewhere, was the largest of the eighteen provinces before Kansu was extended across the desert, and is by far the richest and most populous. It is bounded on the north by Kansu and Shensi, on the east by Hupei and Hunan, on the south by Kweichau and Yunnan, and on the west by Tibet and Kokonor. Its area is estimated at over 180,000

square miles, and its population at varying amounts: in 1882 it was 35,000,000 according to the Customs Report, but since then it has been generally assumed to be not under 60,000,000.

The province of Shantung, the resources of which are dealt with in another chapter, is bounded on the east by the Yellow Sea, on the south by Kiangsu and the Yellow Sea, on the west by the province of Chihli, and on the north by Chihli and its gulf. A population variously estimated, but probably numbering as many as 30,000,000, is found within its area of 53,000 square miles. Possessed of enormous mineral wealth, Shantung is also a great agricultural province, as is proved by the revenue from the land-tax, the largest derived from any of the eighteen provinces, viz., taels 2,600,000.

South of Shantung lies the province of Kiangsu, between the ocean on the east and Anhwei on the west, with Chekiang to the south. Its area comprises over 40,000 square miles, with a population of some 40,000,000. A great portion of the province is covered with lakes and marshes, but it is generally very fertile. Amongst its many fine cities are Shanghai, Nanking (the capital), and Suchau. From A.D. 317 to 582 Nanking was the metropolis of China, and once again during the Ming dynasty, from 1368 to 1403. Suchau is situated close to the Tahu Lake, whence streams and canals place the city in communication with various parts of the province, especially with Shanghai, the road between the two cities being a continuous

line of towns and villages. In 1859 Suchau was a city which, for industry and wealth, was not to be matched in China, and had then a population estimated at over a million. Suchau and Hangchau in Chekiang represented to the Chinese the terrestrial Paradise. "To be happy on earth," said they, "one must be born in Suchau, live in Canton, and die in Hangchau."

Following the coast-line southwards the next province is Chekiang, bordered by Anhwei and Kiangsi on the west and Fukien on the south. It is the smallest of the eighteen provinces, being only 35,000 square miles in extent, its population numbering 8,000,000. Chekiang is renowned alike for its fertility, its forest and fruit trees, its populous towns, and its salubrious climate. Hangchau, the capital, is one of the finest towns in the Empire, and was described by Marco Polo, who visited it in 1286, as "beyond dispute the noblest in the world."

The next province bordering on the ocean is Fukien, with Kiangsi on the west and Kiangtung on the south. Formosa lies opposite Fukien and formed part of that province until it passed into the hands of Japan. The country is in many parts highly cultivated and is generally densely peopled, having a population of 23,000,000 in an area of 45,000, square miles. Amongst its numerous large cities are the treaty ports of Fuchau and Amoy.

The province of Honan, containing fertile sections of the Great Plain, supports a population

of 29,000,000 on an area of 67,000 square miles. On its north lie Shansi and Chihli, on the east Anhwei, on the south Hupei, and Shensi on the west. The northern part of Honan, next the Yellow River, is level, fertile, and well peopled. Kaifung, the capital, lying close to the southern bank of that river, was the metropolis from A.D. 780 to 1129.

The province of Anhwei is situated in the central and southern parts of the Great Plain, between Honan and Hupei on the west, and Kiangsu and Chekiang on the east and north, with Kiangsi in the south. The area of the province is 54,000 square miles, and its population over 36,000,000. The country is similar to Kiangsu, but has fewer cities and is less fertile.

The central provinces of Hupei and Hunan were formerly one province. Hupei is the more populous and fertile but the smaller of the two, its area being some 70,000 square miles against 83,000 for Hunan, the respective populations being 28,000,000 and 20,000,000. The Yangtsze flows through Hupei, carrying an immense amount of silt into the side valleys. The south-eastern portion of the province is considered the most fertile portion of China. The provincial capital, Wuchang, lies on the southern side of the Yangtsze, Hankau and Hangyang being on the opposite bank and divided by its tributary the Han. The position of Hankau, situated as it is on the central portion of the Yangtsze, has been dwelt on by all travellers in China; it seems destined to

be the port of eastern Central Asia. The rich province of Hunan, the population of which was reduced by the Taiping rebellion, is drained by four rivers whose basins occupy almost the entire province. The people have an evil reputation for roughness and turbulence.

The province of Kiangsi, south of Anhwei and Hupei, is bounded by Hunan on the west, Kwangtung on the south, and Fukien on the east. Its area is 68,000 square miles, and its population numbers 26,000,000. The country is hilly and well watered, much of it being marshland. Its soil is generally productive, and the inhabitants, like those of the coast provinces, engage to a considerable extent in manufactures.

Of the islands belonging to China two may be briefly mentioned. Hainan is about 150 miles long by 100 broad. The interior of the island is mountainous and well wooded. The inhabitants, said to be racially the same as the mountaineers in Kweichau, have only partially submitted to the Chinese. Kiungchau fu, the prefectural town, lies at the mouth of the Himu River; but the port is Hoihau, where the entrance is so shallow that trade centres at Pakhoi, the nearest treaty port on the mainland.

Chusan is of particular interest to England, having been occupied several times by a British force. It was captured first in 1840 and again in 1842, when it was held till 1846 as a guarantee for the fulfilment of the treaty with China, until the full pay-

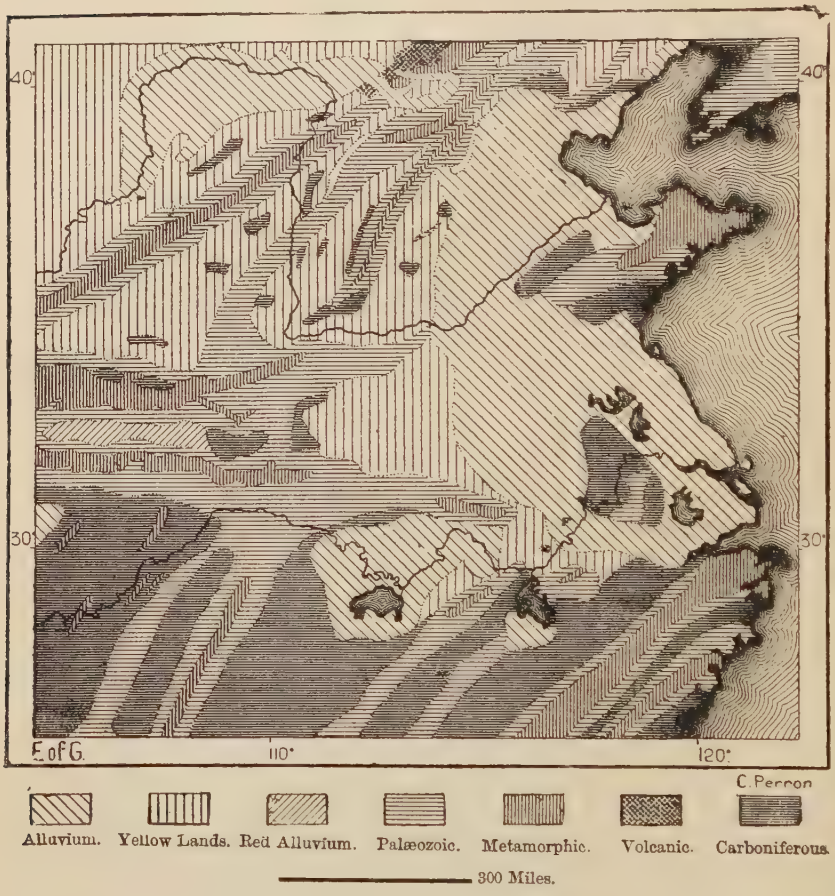
ment of the indemnity had been made by the Chinese Government according to the provisions of the Treaty of Nanking. It was again occupied in the war of 1860. The length of the island, which was incorporated with China in the seventh century, is 20 miles and its greatest breadth six, its circumference being 51¼. Tinghai, the capital, situated half a mile from the shore, is surrounded by a wall three miles in extent. The harbour is well land-locked, the water varying from four to eight fathoms, but strong currents run at nine knots an hour, and there is no secure holding ground. The population of the island is about 200,000.

Of the two chief features of northern China—the mountainous region and the Great Plain—the latter is economically by far the more important, and is the richest part of China. The Plain extends some 700 miles from the Great Wall and mountain ranges north of Peking, to the junction of the Poyang Lake with the Yangtsze River. Of varying breadth, in its northern part next Shantung and Shansi it has an average of 200 miles; farther south it is, roughly, 300 miles broad; and again, in its southern section, next to the Yangtsze basin, it is as much as 400 miles in width, stretching from the seaboard inland. The northern section of the Plain is partly a deposit of loess, being alluvial elsewhere, and the region of Kiangsu is low and liable to inundation, with frequent lakes, the whole covered with a network of water-courses. The population

supported on this plain is colossal, according to the census of 1812 no fewer than 177,000,000, probably the most densely populated section of the whole world's surface.

Before leaving the subject of the physical aspect, the loess formation peculiar to the northern provinces must be mentioned. Loess is a solid but friable earth, of brownish-yellow colour, differing from loam by its highly porous and tubular structure. It is found in most of the northern provinces, disappearing gradually towards the lower Yangtsze, though remnants are found in the lakes south of that river. No trace of it is found in Szechuan. How far it extends into Central Asia is as yet unknown. With the loess, called *hwang-tu* by the Chinese, are bound up the distinguishing features of interior China, not merely in regard to scenery, but agricultural products, dwellings, and means of transport. The loess spreads over high and low ground alike, smoothing the irregularities, and having often a thickness of as much as 1000 feet. Its peculiar feature is its vertical cleavage and sudden crevices, which are narrow, of vast depth, and greatly ramified. No scenery presents smoother, gentler, and more monotonous outlines than a loess basin if overlooked from some high point of view, yet, once the traced roads are left, it is impassable even on foot, and the strayed traveller finds himself in a labyrinth of vertical walls, irretrievably lost. It is thus one of the most difficult countries in the world for either military or engineering purposes.

In the loess region the people dwell mainly in caves. Agriculture in northern China has been aptly said



LOESS FORMATION THROUGHOUT NORTH CHINA.

to be confined to the alluvial plains and the loess, in southern China to the alluvial plains and the terraced hillsides. Richthofen has given to the

north and south the names of Loess and Non-Loess China—no mere pedantic terms, for they accurately describe the two regions.

It is a curious fact that, excepting in the loess regions, the Chinese are able to cultivate only a certain portion of the soil, bearing a direct ratio to the quantity of manure they are able to supply and to the density of population, as proved by the slow rate at which certain districts, left uncultivated in consequence of depopulation caused by the Taiping rebels, have been regained to agriculture.

As might be expected from the varied character of the country, comprising wild mountainous tracts, tablelands, the loess and non-loess regions, and alluvial plains, the products vary greatly, as do the people and their language. From north to south, from east to west, the races, although now for the most part welded into one people, are distinguishable; and although there is one written language and one official dialect, commonly known as the "Peking dialect," obtaining among the educated classes everywhere, still the number of *patois* is great, and in the south-west and south the aboriginal tribes retain their languages.

The ancient Chinese, who introduced civilisation and subdued the aboriginal tribes, entered China from the north-west, following the course of the Hoang ho. The valley of the Yangtsze and the whole region to the south continued up to the Christian era to be the abode of savage tribes, which were gradually and indeed only partially

absorbed and assimilated. The aborigines, who were driven south as the Chinese moved forward, are still found on the islands of Formosa and Hainan, and on the mainland in Kweichau, Szechuan, Yunnan, Kwangtung, and Kwangsi, and are some millions in number. They are divided by the Chinese into a multitude of tribes, but there are really only three races —the Lolo, the Miao, and the Pai or Shan. They are warlike and hold their own against the Chinese.

There is probably no family of the human race, certainly none with such claims to consideration, of which so little is known as these aboriginal peoples of southern China, a fact doubtless largely due to the maze of senseless names given to the tribes by the Chinese. Bourne made twenty-two vocabularies, with the result, however, that, exclusive of the Tibetans (including Sifan and Kutsung), it is clear there are but three great non-Chinese races in Southern China — The Lolo, the Shan and the Miao-tzu.*

* "Where the Lolo came from is not yet known," says Bourne, "but of their present habitat it is possible to get an idea. In the great bend of the Yangtsze (103° east longitude), between that river and the An-ning River, the Lolo are at home; there they live independent of China, under their own tribal chiefs aud aristocracy—the 'black bones' of Mr. Baber's fascinating description. Thence they extend in a scattered manner as far north as Wên-ch'uan Hsien . . . To the west they extend to the Mekong; to the south they are found occupying here and there the higher ground, until the plateau breaks into the plain; to the east they are found as far as Kuei-yang-Fu. They seem to be more numerous as Taliang Shan, their present home, is approached, and they form much the largest part of the population in north-eastern Yunnan and north-western Kueichau."—"China," No. 1. 1888.

The Shans are not met north-east of Yunnan fu, but are found at the lower levels all along the south Yunnan border, and from Kwangnan fu to the border of Kweichau they form almost the whole population. They must have been masters of Kwangsi before the Chinese.* It appears likely that the Shans mainly reached Kwangsi across the Yunnan plateau; those in southern Kweichau however, are undoubtedly immigrants from Kwangsi, and did not cross Yunnan.

The Li, the aborigines of Hainan, are like those of south-west China known as "wild" and "civilised," and are usually in a state of chronic rebellion, just as the Formosan aborigines always have been. It is usually assumed that they originally came from the Malay Peninsula, as their features, dress, and habits indicate a certain affinity with the Malays.

The proportion of Mohammedans in the population of China is large. Even in Peking there are said to be as many as twenty thousand Mohammedan families, and in Paoting fu, the capital of the province, there are one thousand followers of the Prophet. The Mohammedan communities are probably chiefly due to the gradual infiltration from Turkestan. Repeated massacres have not served to arrest their growth. And, while Christianity, an exotic, seems to be waning, the change of religion

* The Yamên at Nanning and the Examination-hall at Kueilin are said to have been built upon the site of Shan palaces.—BOURNE, "China," No. 1. 1888.

gives to the Chinese convert of Islam the qualities he lacks, namely, independence, courage and devotion. Their principal colonies are in Yunnan and the three provinces of the north-west, those of the former being known as Pantais or Panthays, of the latter as Dunganis. During the period of disturbance succeeding the Taiping rebellion, the Mohammedans in both regions threw off the yoke of China, but having no co-operation, their risings were suppressed after a long and desolating conflict. The Moslem population is much larger than usually supposed, notwithstanding the numerous rebellions and the devastation of large regions, and probably is from twenty-five to thirty millions. From their numbers and character they form an important factor as regards the future of China. In appearance little to be distinguished from the ordinary Chinese, pledged to abstention from intoxicating drinks and opium, and united for the purpose of self-defence, they are really superior to them. The religion of the Chinese Mohammedans is lax, and they are said to closely resemble their co-religionists in Kashgaria, who are so tolerant that they do not scruple to give their daughters in marriage to the non-Mohammedan Chinese. The old Moslem spirit, that of the sword, asserts itself, however, from time to time, when those who will not embrace the Faith are slaughtered wholesale.

The climate presents many varieties of the temperate, and even of the frigid and torrid zones.

The northern provinces have winters like those of Siberia, while the heat of Canton is equal to that of Hindostan. Between these two extremes is found every variation of temperature and climate. During the months of December, January, and February, the rivers debouching in the Gulf of Pechihli are frozen up, and even the gulf itself is fringed with a broad border of ice.*

The plain-dwellers of China consider the highland provinces—especially the three south-western ones, namely, Kwangtung, Kwangsi, and Yunnan—to be extremely unhealthy, a reputation in great part due to mere prejudice, which probably arose from these provinces being remote, cut-off regions, whither criminals and political offenders were transported. The highlanders, on their part, it is to be noted, look upon the plains as far from healthy. The central regions are, perhaps, the healthiest—not so subject to cold as the northern and western districts, nor so liable to changes as along the seaboard.

* A landing can usually be effected at Shanhaikwan during winter time; the writer landed there last year in midwinter.

CHAPTER II

FOREIGN RELATIONS

THE subject of the earlier foreign relations with China can only be dealt with here in the briefest manner possible—merely so far as to enable the reader to understand the later relations between China and the outer world. Those readers who may be anxious to acquire some further knowledge of this interesting subject will find in the works of the Jesuit Fathers, of Davis, Yule,* Richthofen and other writers, a large fund of information.

At eras far apart, China has been distinguished by different appellations, says Yule, "according as it was regarded as the terminus of a southern sea

* Yule divides his notes on the intercourse of China and Western nations as follows:—

I. Earliest Traces of Intercourse. Greek and Roman knowledge of China.
II. Chinese knowledge of the Roman Empire.
III. Communication with India.
IV. Intercourse with the Arabs.
V. Intercourse with Armenia and Persia, etc.
VI. Nestorian Christianity in China.
VII. Literary information regarding China previous to the Mongol era.
VIII. China under the Mongol Dynasty, known as Cathay.
IX. Cathay passing into China. Conclusion.
Supplementary Notes. YULE, *Cathay*, i. pp. xxxiii.–ccliii.

route coasting the great peninsula and islands of Asia, or as that of a northern land traversing the longitude of that continent. In the former aspect, the name applied has nearly always been some form of the name Sin, Chin, Sinæ, China. In the latter point of view the region in question was known to the ancients as the land of Seres; to the Middle Ages as the empire of Cathay." *

Besides Ptolemy, Pliny has notices of the Seres, whose country he places upon the eastern ocean of the extremity of Asia. The information contained in these two authors was all that was available down to the time of Justinian, and though the account given by them was not of a very comprehensive character, their description of the Chinese of that time is, as Yule remarks, applicable to-day. The old reputation of the Seres for honesty is frequently referred to by Yule: "Indeed, Marco's whole account of the people here (in Kinsay) might pass for an extended paraphrase of the Latin commonplaces regarding the Seres." The

* "The region of the Seres is a vast and populous country, touching on the east the ocean and the limits of the habitable world; and extending west nearly to Imaus and the confines of Bactria. The people are civilised men, of mild, just, and frugal temper; eschewing collisions with their neighbours, and even shy of close intercourse, but not averse to dispose of their own products, of which raw silk is the staple, but which include also silk stuffs, furs, and iron of remarkable quality. It seems probable that relations existed from the earliest times between China and India, and possibly, too, between China and Chaldæa. The 'Sinim' of the Prophet Isaiah is by many taken to mean China, and Ptolemy's 'Sinæ' are generally understood to have been the Chinese." —YULE, *Cathay*.

reputation of the Chinese for integrity and justice, in spite of much that has been said against it, must have had some solid foundation, he truly says, for it has prevailed to our own day among their neighbours in various parts of Asia which are quite remote from one another.

The early Chinese writings make frequent mention of trade relations with a land called Tatsin-Kwoh, believed to have been the Roman Empire, and emissaries passed between Rome and China. The traffic in the rich productions of China and India was the chief stimulus to trade adventure, and the gradual springing up of this commerce led to the Nestorian missionaries penetrating those regions, which they did from Persia in the seventh century, seemingly through the north-western region of China. These Nestorians disappeared from the face of history, leaving no trace but that of a stone, the famous tablet of A.D. 781, which till lately was to be found in the yard of a temple at Sian fu. This monument, excavated in 1625, which is held to have attested the ancient propagation of Christianity in China, was inscribed partly in Chinese and partly in Syriac. The story that a holy man named Olopüen went from the country of Tatsin to China in the year 636 of our era, and that he was well received by the Emperor, who caused a Christian church to be built, is wrongly treated by Voltaire as the merest fiction. "Il y a assez de vérités historiques," he says, "sans y mêler ces absurdes mensonges."

In the ninth century China was visited by two Arabs.* The travels of Buddhist pilgrims from China to India, notably those of Fahian (399–404), of Hiuen-tsang (628–645), and of Hwui-sing (518), contain much information regarding the peoples of Central and Western Asia, and it is possible that further records may yet be found, in the convent libraries of Tibet, especially of Lhassa. The official histories from B.C. 300 to A.D. 900 give useful information regarding Syria and Persia, Greece and Parthia; but, as Yule remarks, the information is fragmentary, the position of places uncertain, and the generalisation from mere outlying borders both incorrect and unwarranted. A few embassies are noted by Pauthier, up to the year 1091, and the Russian Bretschneider has established that the visits of the Arabs were frequent down to the Sung and Tang dynasties. He gives much interesting information regarding the Chinese mediæval travellers to Western countries between A.D. 1220 and 1260.

The Franciscan monks sent on missions to the

* "Abu *Zaid* (one of the Arabs), like his predecessor," says Yule, "dwells upon the orderly and upright administration of China while in its normal state. This, indeed, seems to have made a strong impression at all times on the other nations of Asia, and we trace this impression in almost every account that has reached us from Theophylactus downwards; whilst it is also probably the kernel of those praises of the justice of the Seres which extend back some centuries further into antiquity. And the Jesuit historian, Jarric, thinks that 'if Plato were to rise from Hades he would declare that his imagined Republic was realised in China.'"

Great Khan about the middle of the thirteenth century were the first to bring to Western Europe the revived knowledge of a great and civilised nation lying to the extreme east, upon the shores of the ocean ; and a Franciscan monk was made Archbishop in Khanbalig (Peking), and the Roman Catholic faith spread. Friar Odoric made his way to Cathay at the commencement of the fourteenth century, and from Zayton journeyed northwards to Peking, where he found the aged Archbishop Corvino and remained some three years. The journey homewards was through Lhassa, and probably by a route *viâ* Cabul and Tabriz to Europe, ending at Venice in 1330. Many now well-known characteristics of the Chinese, unknown or unnoticed by other travellers of his time, are given by Odoric.* Ibn Batuta, the Moor, travelled in China about 1347. The Far East was frequently reached by European traders in the first half of the fourteenth century, "a state of things," says Yule, "difficult to realise when we see how all those regions, when reopened only two centuries later, seemed almost as absolutely new discoveries as the empires which about the same time Cortes and Pizarro were

* "His notices of the custom of fishing with cormorants," says Yule, "of the habits of letting the finger-nails grow long, and of compressing the women's feet, as well as of the divisions of the Khan's Empire into twelve provinces, with four chief viziers, are peculiar to him, I believe, among all the European travellers of the age. Polo mentions none of them. The names which he assigns to the Chinese post-stations, and to the provincial Boards of Administration, the technical Turki term which he uses for a sack of rice, etc., are all tokens of the reality of his experience."

annexing in the West." European missions and merchants were no longer to be found in China after the middle of the fourteenth century, when the Mongol dynasty was tottering before its fall. The voyage of Nicolo di Conti, the Venetian, who travelled "quite through India" and after twenty-five years returned home, is considered apocryphal. Having made denial of his faith to save his life, he had to seek absolution of the Pope in 1444. Much information is given by Mayers regarding Chinese explorations of the Indian Ocean during the fifteenth century.

The existence of a Jewish colony in China was discovered by the Jesuit Fathers in the seventeenth century, if not even earlier; Kaifung, some four hundred and fifty miles south-west of Peking, being the headquarters of this colony. When Martin visited the place in 1866, he found the synagogue, supposed to have been built in 1164, in ruins; the Jews had dispersed, some having become Mohammedans, and not one being able to speak a word of Hebrew. In 1850 certain Hebraic rolls were recovered from the few remaining descendants of former Jews, but little really seems to be known regarding this Jewish colony, and the chief information on record is found in a memorandum on the subject in the *Lettres édifiantes*.

There is no need to deal at length with the wonderful journeys accomplished by Marco Polo, who visited the Court of Kublai Khan in 1274. The Venetian, as is well known, became a favourite with

the Emperor, and spent, in all, some twenty-one years in the East, returning to Venice in 1295. In his edition of Marco Polo, Yule has given to the world the most erudite, and also the most charming, annotation of the great Venetian traveller's life-work. On nearing the provinces of Cathay, Marco Polo passed through towns containing Nestorian Christians, who were met with again in Yunnan and other parts of the Empire.

In 1644 the Manchus completed their conquest of China. In 1627, while in possession merely of Liaotung, an edict was issued compelling their Chinese subjects, under penalty of death, to adopt their mode of wearing the hair, as a sign of allegiance, and it is the custom thus compulsorily established that has become the fashion now held in such esteem by the Chinese. It was not only this custom of the *coiffure* which was introduced by the Manchus. The general opinion prevalent in the West is that the exclusive and anti-foreign feeling now met with in China is something peculiar to the Chinese character and dating from remote antiquity. It is probable, however, that it was the conquering race, the Manchus, who forced this spirit upon the Chinese people, which led to the attempt, so long maintained, to hermetically seal the Empire against the intrusion of the foreigner. From the brief summary already given it will have been seen that before the advent of the Manchus China maintained constant relations with the countries of Asia; traders from Arabia, Persia,

and India trafficked in Chinese ports and passed into the interior. The tablet of Sian fu, already mentioned, shows that missionaries from the West were propagating the Christian religion in the eighth century; in the thirteenth Marco Polo not only was cordially received, but held office in the Empire, and at that time the Christian religious ceremonies were tolerated at Peking, where there was an Archbishop. To the close of the last Chinese dynasty the Jesuit missionaries were well received and treated at the capital, and, as Huc remarks, the first Tartar Emperors merely tolerated what they found existing. This would seem to show conclusively that the Chinese did not originally have the aversion to foreigners which is usually assumed. The explanation given by Huc, that it was the Manchu policy—that of a small number of nomad conquerors holding in subjection the vast population—to preserve China for themselves, seems reasonable; and Huc rightly shows that this very policy, which served to establish the Manchu power, would eventually lead to its destruction.*

* "The Mantchoos, it is evident, were, on account of the smallness of their numbers in the midst of this vast empire, compelled to adopt stringent measures to preserve their conquest. For fear that foreigners should be tempted to snatch their prey from them, they have carefully closed the ports of China against them, thinking thus to secure themselves from ambitious attempts from without; and in the interior of the empire they have sought to keep their enemies divided by their system of rapid and constant change of public officers. These two methods have been crowned with success up to the present time; and it is really an astonishing fact, and one,

The history of Russian intercourse with China may here be briefly recited.

The first record of Russians appearing at Peking is that of two Cossacks who made their way there in 1567, and fifty years later another Russian reached the capital, both visits being without any result. About the year 1643, at a time when the Manchus were engaged with the war which ultimately made them masters of China, then in the throes of rebellion, the commanders of the Russian settlements north of the Amur valley commenced exploring expeditions, regarded as hostile excursions by the Chinese. In 1649 Chaboroff made an incursion. The Tsar Alexis sent an envoy in 1653, who refused to perform the act of obeisance, and was dismissed; and Stepanoff in 1655 made an incursion into Chinese territory. But, shortly after, the Manchu-Chinese army, inured to warfare by the campaigns in China, defeated the Russian troops, which were then numerically weak. In the years 1658, 1672 and 1677 three trading caravans reached Peking, and disputes between the Russian and Chinese soldiers and settlers along the banks of

perhaps, not sufficiently considered, that a mere handful of nomads should have been able to exercise, for more than two hundred years, a peaceable and absolute dominion over the vastest empire in the world, and over a population which, whatever may be the common opinion respecting them, are really extremely stirring and fond of change. A policy, at the same time adroit, supple, and vigorous, could alone have obtained a similar result; but there is every reason to think that the methods which once contributed to establish the power of the Mantchoo Tartars will ultimately tend to overthrow it."—*The Chinese Empire*, Huc.

the Amur became frequent, and hostilities for the possession of the river were maintained in a very desultory manner. After a five years' war, China

MAP SHOWING ADVANCE OF RUSSIA, TO THE DETRIMENT OF CHINA.

imposed peace upon Russia by the Treaty of Nerchinsk, in 1689, when a frontier between China and Russian Siberia was agreed on, by which the whole of the Amur valley was placed in the hands

of the Chinese Emperor Kanghi, Russia retaining merely one bank of a portion of the Argun River, an upper affluent of the Amur. The frontier thus decided upon was watched continually, the Chinese commander at each frontier post having to inspect daily the posts on the line of demarcation. "Only in this manner," says Plath, "could the frontier be kept for a hundred years against the Russians. Across the rivers horsehair ropes were drawn for the same purpose." The Tsar sent a Russian embassy, in 1692, under Eberhard Ysbrand Ides, to Peking. In 1715 a considerable number of Russians, who had been taken prisoners by the Chinese, were permitted to settle at Peking, and four years later Peter the Great sent Ismailoff to arrange regarding trade. In 1727* the frontier was again demarcated, leaving the eastern boundary as it then was, but rectifying that lying westward from the Argun, and this arrangement remained unaltered till the middle of the present century. The Russians were allowed to erect a church and school at Peking

* "Commencing with our Embassy to China in the year 1653, down to the recent refusal on the part of that Power to ratify the Treaty of Livadia, all our relations with the Middle Empire have been based on the much-vaunted friendship of two hundred years' duration ; in reality, however, on a two-hundred-year-old policy of subserviency and sycophancy towards her. The only consolatory exceptions during all this long period are the energetic action of Count Raguzinsky who in 1727 concluded the treaty which laid the foundation of our Kiakhta trade ; and those similar actions in the latter portion of the present century on the part of Counts Muravieff and Ignatieff, by which we obtained the Amur country."—PRJEVALSKI.

in 1727, which developed into a permanent mission. The early diaries of de Lange,* who accompanied Ismailoff to Peking, throw light on the first relations of the Russians. It was under the 1727 treaty that a caravan was allowed to make its way to Peking every three years. It appears, however, that these caravans met with so little success that, though in the first twenty years six journeys were made, they became afterwards less frequent. In 1858 Muravieff obtained for Russia a large territory, the Amur Province, and General Ignatieff, in 1860, by a dexterous use of the victory of the Anglo-French troops at Peking, with a stroke of the pen transferred to Russia the whole coast of Manchu-Tartary, from the mouth of the Amur River to the frontier of Corea.

The Russian overland expansion in Asia began, therefore, at an early date, though actively prosecuted only in the last forty or fifty years. But the Russians, though they moved chiefly by land, also navigated the Polar seas and the Siberian

* De Lange accompanied Ismailoff, captain of the Tsar's guards and envoy extraordinary, to Kanghi, to clear the difficulties regarding trade. Lange remained in Peking until 1722, when Ismailoff left. After the frontiers had been fixed by the Treaty of 1726, Lange was again sent to China with a large caravan, and, on his return, was made a councillor of Chancellory. In 1736 he paid one more visit to Peking, and on his return was made Vice-Governor of Irkutsk.—*Biographie Universelle.*

The travels of John Bell, of Antermony, contain, *inter alia*, part of a journey through Siberia to Peking, in the years 1719, 1720, 1721 with a map of the author's two routes between Moscow and Peking, and a translation of the journal of de Lange.

rivers. Like other nations they, too, sought for Cathay and Zipangu.

THE DENSITY OF POPULATION IN ASIA.

The process of land expansion by means of settlements—"Stanitzas"* as the Russians call them—

* "A fort is like a stone cast upon the field," says the Circassian simile: "rain and wind may carry it away, or cover it with earth; but a *Stanitza* resembles a plant, which, firmly rooted in the soil, gradually spreads over the whole field."

differs widely from the over-sea colonial system or expansion of the Western maritime Powers. The

THE DISTRIBUTION OF RACES.

advantages possessed by Russia are apparent. Given ambitious rulers, great poverty of the mother-country, an idea to follow, and, as an objective,

the wealth of Far Cathay, it is not surprising that Russian expansion should be restless, active, and persistent. Neither the Tsar, nor the officials, nor even the people, are enthusiastic about any Western foreigners. The party which derides the "decaying West," fosters national chauvinism, and despises foreign nationalities, has, for the present, the upper hand, and believes, as do also the lower classes, that the Russians are the chosen people. Aspiring, in Europe, to the conquest of Constantinople, the East Roman seat of Empire; in Asia they consider themselves the heirs and successors of the great world-conquerors and rulers, Genghis Khan and Tamerlane. The resources of the whole empire are in the hands of one man, who follows a family policy instituted by Peter the Great. In this expansion there is one characteristic which deserves to be noticed, namely, that Russia succeeds in creating a system which assimilates the natives, a process not met with elsewhere. The Central Asian Khanates have, it must be noted, no natural centres, each forming merely a complement to the other, and in no other field of expansion or colonisation are there so few germs of secession. The expansion through Siberia to the Pacific, and thus to China, is not so great an achievement—as maintained by certain Russian and French writers—as the exploitation by England of the countries bordering the Indian Ocean and the Pacific. Still, it is true that the sea lying between England and the Far East, however extensive it may be, "unites instead of separates."

The trade of the Dutch with China commenced after they had achieved their independence in Europe, when they made war upon the Oriental possessions of Spain, capturing Malacca, the Spice Islands, and other positions. In 1622 they were repulsed at Macao, and established themselves in the Pescadores, and a couple of years later in Formosa. The Portuguese first visited a port of China in 1514, and three years later took place the trading expedition to Canton under Andrada, conveying the unfortunate Ambassador Perez, who died in fetters in China. Besides Macao, Formosa was included among the Portuguese dependencies, but the former was the only permanent foothold of Portugal in China. From 1543, the date of the capture of the Philippines, the Spaniards carried on a trade between Manila and the Chinese coasts, and in the next century two Spanish forts were established in Formosa (Spain and Portugal being at this time under one crown). The Dutch drove the Spaniards out of that island in 1642, but twenty years later were themselves expelled by the Chinese pirate Koxinga, and thenceforward they held no possessions in the Chinese seas. In 1732 Danish and Swedish traders, in 1736 French, and in 1784 Americans, appeared at Canton.

The French intercourse with China has been considerable, and both the earlier knowledge of the West acquired by China, and that of China acquired by the West, were mainly achieved by French missionaries. No French Government

ever sent a mission to Peking to seek merely advantages of trade, as others have done, but as early as 1289 Philip the Fair received despatches from Persia and China, suggesting common action against their enemies, the Saracens. Louis XIV., in 1688, addressed a letter to the Emperor Kanghi, whom he termed "Most high, most excellent, most puissant, and most magnanimous friend, dearly beloved good friend," signing himself "Your most dear and good friend, Louis." In 1844 an important mission, under the direction of M. Lagrené, proceeded to Peking, and a treaty was signed between France and China. The French treaty of 1858 was supplemented by a Convention signed at Peking in 1860, which led to controversy between the French and Chinese, culminating in an understanding, in 1865, the formal ratification of which was procured only in 1894. Further conventions were concluded in 1885, 1887 and 1895, the latter two containing important clauses affecting Southern China.

The initiation of a Chinese policy on the part of France began seriously with the expedition of Doudart de Lagrée in 1867, described in the most charming manner by the gifted Louis de Carné, when it was first seen that France could acquire in Tongking one of the keys in China.* The later phases of that policy are dealt with elsewhere.

* "The force of circumstances, and the weakness of the Chinese themselves (this was during the Mussulman rebellion in Yunnan)," wrote M. de Carné, shortly before his death, "enable us to foresee the dismemberment of that ancient empire. In the presence of such an eventuality France should be prepared. Her part

The first Prussian expedition was in 1861, under the Count von Eulenberg. Some years later German traders in China suggested that their Government should seize a portion of Chinese territory, Formosa or Corea, in order to found a "German Australia." Treaties were concluded in 1861 and 1880. But nothing was done in this direction until Kiaochau was occupied.

The English intercourse with China commenced later than that of other maritime Powers of the West, but has grown to great proportions. The history of British trade with China preceding our direct connection with India is that of the East India Company, which in 1613 established a factory in Japan and some two years later opened agencies in Formosa and Amoy. An attempt was made, in 1627, to commence trade with Canton through Macao, which proved unsuccessful owing to the opposition of the Portuguese, who had been established there some seventy years. Nominal participation in the trade of Canton was granted to the British in 1635, but little progress achieved until Oliver Cromwell concluded the treaty with Portugal by which free access was obtained throughout the East Indies. When the Ming dynasty, in 1664, was replaced by that of the present Ta Tsing, a com-

is traced out by the position which she already holds on the Annamite Peninsula. It is absolutely necessary that she should exercise a paramount influence in Tonquin, which is for her *the key of China*, and that, without hurrying by any impatience the course of events, she should show her flag to the people whose protectorate may some day fall into her hands."

plete contempt for trade and strong antipathy to foreigners began to show themselves as a marked trait of the new ruling house. The Company's factory at Amoy was destroyed in 1681; but the agents, in those days called "supercargoes," finding that the Manchus permitted trade to be carried on provided their supremacy was humbly acknowledged, sent ships to Macao, re-established the factory at Amoy, and soon after founded another on the island of Chusan. Till that time every vessel upon arrival was boarded by an officer of the Hoppo, the Imperial Superintendent of the native Customs, and by an officer of the Imperial household, who were propitiated by a *cumshaw*, or present, upon the amount of which depended the extent of the rates and duties to be levied. When the mutual difficulties had been overcome, after the employment of arguments usual on such occasions, the ship proceeded to Whampoa, at that time the port of Canton, where trade was opened through the intermediary of a Chinese trader who was officially recognised.

The East India Company having appointed a chief supercargo, who was also to act as King's Minister or Consul for China, the Manchu Government nominated an official to supervise foreign trade, with the title of "the Emperor's Merchant." This officer was naturally far from being a *persona grata* with the supercargoes and traders. A contest arose between the two officials, and every endeavour was made by the Chinese to depreciate

the position of the King's Minister and to reduce him to the level of a mere *taipan*, or chief manager. The foreigners had now not merely the Hoppo and his many underlings to placate with *douceurs*, but the "Imperial Merchant" and his horde of hangers-on. The Manchu commissioner became the intermediary between the foreigners and the native merchants, and also the means of communication between them and the local Chinese authorities. Thus was established a powerful Chinese combination, which maintained itself by submitting to a heavy "squeeze" at the hands of the Viceroy and Governor of Canton on the one hand and of the Hoppo on the other. The office of the latter was a remunerative one, but he in turn had to purchase his five years' term for collecting the Customs, both foreign and native, by a heavy payment to Peking. Foreign trade was therefore carried on under great disabilities; but notwithstanding all obstacles commerce flourished, and by the year 1715 British ships commenced to sail direct to the Bogue, where, after the settlement of fees and duties, the required "chop," or stamped permit, was obtained, and permission granted to proceed to Whampoa to trade.

In 1720 a fresh change was made in the conduct of foreign trade, the "Emperor's Merchant" being replaced by a body of Chinese traders, known as the "Co-Hong," with power to levy an *ad valorem* duty of four per cent. on imports and exports. The Co-Hong was under the superintendence of the Hoppo, and responsible to the Viceroy and Governor

for their share of the profits and the solvency of each member. The members of the corporation, moreover, were answerable for the payment of all fees and duties, and even for offences and crimes committed by the ships' officers or crews. An import duty of three taels per *picul* was sanctioned by Imperial edict in 1722, and an attempt made shortly after by the Imperial Government to introduce a fixed tariff; but the conditions of affairs was not improved, as the tariff was treated with contempt by both the Hoppo and the Co-Hong. A special tax of ten per cent. on foreign imports and exports followed, concerning which a strong appeal was made by the foreigners to the Throne—in the attitude of humble, or rather abject, suppliants, be it noted—but not till 1736, on the occasion of the accession to power of the Emperor Kienlung, was exemption obtained from the impost. The vessels of nationalities other than the British now commenced to trade with Canton.

A fresh disability was introduced twenty years later, making it imperative for ships to obtain the security of two members of the Co-Hong. The powers of the combination, too, were extended, all dealings of foreigners with small traders and purveyors of provisions being prohibited, especially with native junks before entering the river, as had been the practice. And this restriction was further emphasised by an Imperial edict entirely prohibiting trade anywhere outside the Bogue. An attempt was made by the chief supercargo to avert the

ruin of the Amoy agency thus threatened, but he completely failed. The interpreter, Mr. Flint, who had been charged with the Amoy negotiations, proceeded to Tientsin, and laid the whole case, involving as it did serious reflections on the local authorities at Canton, before the Throne. The appeal was nominally successful, and an Imperial Commissioner, accompanied by Mr. Flint, was despatched to Canton to remove the Hoppo from office, to abolish illegal extortion, and to hold a full investigation, with the inevitable result that the commissioner was "squared," and grave charges were formulated against Mr. Flint of having set at defiance the Imperial edict. He and the supercargoes who had been summoned to the Yamên were attacked and maltreated and compelled to perform the *kotow*. Mr. Flint was detained in prison, and a special mission to Canton to obtain his release having proved unsuccessful, and a heavy bribe being refused, he was actually kept in confinement till the year 1762, when he returned to England.

The system of bribery and corruption, coupled with submission to gross indignities, continued until, in 1771, permission was accorded to foreigners to reside at Canton during the winter, the business season. At this time the supercargoes gained a decisive victory over the Co-Hong, obtaining its dissolution by means of a "cumshaw" of 100,000 taels, the contributions due to the authorities having fallen into arrears. Some ten years later the old institution was revived in another form by

the creation of "Hong merchants," native brokers who bore the title of "mandarin." The sole difference between the old system and the new was that, in lieu of the earlier common financial responsibility, there was now a *Consoo*, an association or guild fund, to supply by a special tax on foreign trade the guarantee provided for.

A fresh impost to meet the requirements of coast defence was imposed in 1805. In the year 1818 there arose a serious difficulty over the "exportation of bullion" question. The balance of trade had been yearly diminishing as foreign commerce grew, and the Chinese authorities restricted the exportation of silver by any vessel to three-tenths of the excess of imports over exports. In view of the alarming export of silver, the authorities in 1831 imposed such crushing restrictions that the supercargoes threatened to suspend operations altogether, later, however, submitting to the Chinese officials.

The foreign trading community in Canton were chafing more and more at what they considered the weakness of the East India Company, and showing signs of resentment at their monopoly, while they evinced an increasing disinclination to submit tamely to the exactions of the Chinese authorities. The restrictions were evaded by the vessels outside the Bogue, where stationary ships were anchored to serve as warehouses. Smuggling grew apace, and the emoluments of the local authorities seriously suffered. It became apparent to the Chinese that there was a growing determination no longer to play

the earlier submissive *rôle*, and that with the cessation of the East India Company's monopoly foreign trade would be placed on an entirely new basis. Both the Imperial Government and the local authorities took a serious view of the position, and in 1832 appeared an edict directing the maritime provinces to place their coast defences and ships of war in repair, "in order to scour the seas and drive away any European vessels (of war) that might make their appearance on the coast." Collision with the foreigners was felt by the Chinese to be inevitable.

For over two centuries the general relations of the East India Company towards the Chinese Government were those of the suppliant trader most humbly acknowledging the supreme sovereignty of the "Son of Heaven." Commerce was beneath the contempt not merely of the Court, but of the *literati* and officials; trade was fit only for the lower, or rather the lowest, classes. Even to the "outer barbarians," however, the Emperor of China was clement, and they were permitted to trade, under certain disabilities, being only allowed to reside for brief periods at intervals in the suburbs of Canton; they were neither to enter the city gates nor travel inland; they could only entertain in their service the lowest class of Chinese, the boat population, who are forbidden to live on shore or to compete at literary examinations. Under such conditions were trade and intercourse maintained.

The Chinese certainly saw but little of the better side of the strangers from the West, whether hailing

from Europe or America. To them the foreigner was a man thinking of nothing but gain by trade, gain at any price; a man of gross material pleasures, a coarse and vicious-tempered being, with no appreciation of Chinese philosophy or literature or history, and not even the most elementary acquaintance with Chinese *etiquette*. To the Chinese, therefore, the foreigner was densely ignorant—a mere savage; he was the "outer barbarian," the "foreign devil." The Chinese had their eyes rudely opened, in 1741, to the fact that foreigners were possessed of some superior advantages. In that year the first British man-of-war, the *Centaur*, commanded by Commodore Anson, made its appearance. Under circumstances of considerable danger, Captain Anson passed the Bogue and pushed on to Whampoa, and still further astonished the Chinese by calling, as an officer of King George II., upon the Viceroy of Canton, audaciously reminding the Chinese officials that etiquette must not be overlooked. To the discomfiture of the Chinese officials, the Viceroy received him. Fifty years later the situation had not improved, and, when two British ships arrived at Canton, the officials absolutely refused to allow them to enter the Bogue. Some time later, in 1816, Captain Maxwell, of the *Alceste*, made his way to Whampoa, after returning the fire of the forts which had opened on his vessel—an incident discreetly ignored by the Chinese.

The embassies sent with costly gifts by King George III., and carried out with much pomp,

accomplished nothing. Both the embassy of Lord Macartney in 1792, and that of Lord Amherst in 1815, were treated as mere "tribute-bearing" deputations. As a concession Britain was admitted by the Court chroniclers to an official position in the roll of "tributary nations," a fiction which was maintained till quite recent years. Even the reception of Ministers by the Emperor at Peking, secured after protracted struggles, has always been held in a building associated with the reception of subject nations. Great changes are occurring, however, as evidenced by the reception accorded to Prince Henry of Prussia.

The more frequent visits of British men-of-war, the protection of Macao against French attack, and the gradual increase of our naval forces impressed the Chinese and enabled our countrymen to take a firmer stand against the Chinese assumption of political and judicial supremacy. Never formally acknowledged, though in fact admitted, this was now formally contested, and the Chinese were informed that foreigners on principle declined longer to submit to it. From that time no foreigner was surrendered to the Chinese authorities to be dealt with.

In view of the impending non-renewal of the charter, held by the East India Company, which had been notified to the Viceroy of Canton, in 1831, that official asked that a British officer should be sent to Canton to control trade. An Act of Parliament was passed two years later to regulate trade

with China and India, declaring it expedient "for the objects of trade and amicable intercourse with the dominions of the Emperor of China" to establish "a British authority in the said dominions." Three Superintendents of Trade—Lord Napier, Mr. Plowden, and Mr. (afterwards Sir) J. F. Davis —were appointed, one of them to preside over "a court of justice with criminal and Admiralty jurisdiction for the trial of offences committed by her Majesty's subjects in the said dominions, or on the high sea within a hundred miles from the coast of China." The superintendents were forbidden to engage in trade, a tonnage duty being sanctioned to defray the cost of their establishment. Extra-territorial jurisdiction was thus established, and the China War of 1841 became inevitable. Lord Palmerston instructed Lord Napier "to foster and protect the trade of his Majesty's subjects in China; to extend trade, if possible, to other ports of China; to induce the Chinese Government to enter into commercial relations with the English Government; and to seek, with peculiar caution and circumspection, to establish eventually direct diplomatic communication with the Imperial Court at Peking; also to have the coast of China surveyed, to prevent disasters;" and "to inquire for places where British ships might find requisite protection in the event of hostilities in the China Sea," an injunction which led to much controversy later on.

A serious mistake was made in associating with Lord Napier, as joint superintendents, two gentle-

men who had been in the East India Company's service, and who, therefore, were most unlikely to receive consideration at the hands of the Chinese. The policy adopted was temporising, vacillating, and ended in Lord Napier finding himself in a false position and being abandoned by his Government. The Cabinet, with all their opportunities, had learnt nothing from the history of the East India Company, and committed the additional blunder of acting under the advice of the directors of that Company, who had already so gravely mismanaged affairs. The sad story of Lord Napier's mission need not be recapitulated here; enough that, after suffering all sorts of indignities at the hands of the Chinese authorities, he was at last permitted to leave Canton and proceed to Macao, where he died—of a broken heart, it is said.

Sir J. F. Davis succeeded Lord Napier, and in 1834 recommended that a despatch should be sent to the Emperor of China by a small fleet, and, if that failed, that measures of coercion should be employed. The British community, supporting this view, proposed that a plenipotentiary should proceed, with an armed force, to demand reparation of the Emperor and to arrange trade questions. Then followed the "quiescent policy" of Davis and his successor. But gradually the idea grew that we must acquire an island on the coast as a "colony." Chusan was first in favour, later Ningpo, then Formosa. The relations between English and Chinese, however, became more and

more strained, the importation of opium being one of the grounds of dispute; and open hostilities took place in 1839. In January 1841 the island of Hongkong was ceded to the English by the Chinese Commissioner Keshen, and, though repudiated by the Chinese Government, the cession was confirmed by the Treaty of Nanking, in 1842, whereby five ports — Canton, Amoy, Fuchau, Ningpo, and Shanghai — were opened to British trade. Possession of Hongkong was taken in 1841, and the next year it was proclaimed a free port, which it has since remained; in 1843 it was constituted a Crown colony.

The so-called "opium war" was really waged to put a stop to grievances which had been accumulating for a hundred and fifty years. No protest against the drug being treated as contraband by Imperial decrees was made; but when commands were issued to the Queen as a vassal of China, and her subjects treated with violence, the question entered upon another phase.

In 1856 war again broke out between Great Britain and China, in consequence of the capture by the Chinese of a "lorcha," the *Arrow*, flying the British flag. Lord Elgin was sent to China as Minister Extraordinary, and after a series of warlike operations, including the taking of Canton, the Treaty of Tientsin was signed in 1858. Peace was only temporary, however. In 1859 the British Ambassador was obstructed when on his way to Peking to obtain a ratification of the treaty, and

it was only after the Anglo-French expedition had forced the passage of the Pei ho, captured the Taku forts, and camped at Peking, that the Convention of Peking, ratifying the Tientsin treaty, was signed, in 1860. The treaty and convention form the basis of the present relations between Great Britain and China. Additional ports in China were opened to British trade, provision was made for the permanent residence at Peking of a British representative, and Kaulun, opposite Hongkong, was ceded to Britain. In 1876 negotiations, arising out of the Margary murder, resulted in the Chifu Convention. The Siam Convention of January 15, 1896, has an important bearing upon the relations of England and France towards southwestern China.*

The incidents of the Chino-Japanese War, culminating in the Treaty of Shimonoseki and the Liaotung Convention of 1895, are so well known as to require no further mention here.

The work by Mr. C. P. Lucas, "A Historical Geography of the Colonies," and Dr. Eitel's "Europe in China," as well as other authorities, have been consulted in this section.

* Article 4 provides that: In the province of Yunnen and Szechuan all the privileges and advantages of any nature conceded to France in the Agreement of 1895, and which may in the future be conceded in these two Chinese provinces, either to Great Britain or to France, shall, as far as rests with them, be extended and rendered common to both Powers and their nationals and dependants, and they engage to use their influence and good offices with the Chinese Government for that purpose.

CHAPTER III

THE ECONOMIC QUESTION

The slumbering factors of an immense industrial production all exist in China, says Richthofen. Amongst the various races of mankind the Chinese is the only one which in all climates, the hottest and the coldest, is capable of great and lasting activity. The Chinaman fulfils in the highest degree the ideal of an intelligent human machine.* It is evident that in many important industries use will be made of this still latent activity, and that the seat of many industries will therefore be transplanted to Chinese ground. The people themselves may lack the initiative, but foreign capital will utilise the opportunity for flooding the markets of the world with the products of cheap Chinese labour.†

* The truth is, that a man of good physical and intellectual qualities, regarded merely as an economical factor, is turned out cheaper by the Chinese than by any other race.—Bourne, "Report on the Trade of Central and Southern China," No. 458, 1898.

† "It is not difficult to guess what they will do when foreign importations cause them serious anxiety," says Simon. "They will erect looms, mills, and steam machinery of all kinds . . . . if needful obtain European assistance, and dispense with European products. It is to be hoped they will stop there, because the day that they take a fancy to engage in Western industry will mark a disastrous day for Europe. Free from taxes, with cheap and abundant labour, it will be impossible to compete with them."

China may be divided into three zones, of which the temperature and products are very different. The northern zone comprises the country lying to the north of the Yellow River. The climate here is much too severe for tea or rice, and the land is mostly sown with millet and barley. The central zone, stretching from the Yellow River southwards to the 26th degree of latitude, has much milder winters than the northern, and rice and wheat thrive well there. It possesses, too, the better kinds of tea, the mulberry, the cotton tree, the jujube, the orange tree, the sugar-cane, and the bamboo, which has been applied by the Chinese to a great variety of purposes. The eastern part of this favoured zone is celebrated for its manufactures of silk and cotton; the middle of it is the granary of China, and might feed the whole country from its enormous harvests of rice; the west abounds in valuable timber. The southern zone, bordered by the sea, has much the same natural productions, but not generally of as good a quality, as the temperature is much higher. Numerous mineral and metalliferous deposits are distributed throughout all zones: coal and iron in the north, south and centre; gold and silver in the provinces of the north, south and west; and copper, tin, mercury, and lead in many parts. Finally, the mountains of the south-west, in Yunnan and Kwei-chau, are rich in metals.

The vast mineral wealth of the country is as yet locked up, and cannot be developed until proper communications are opened. The population is

only dense along and close to the seaboard and the main waterways of the interior. Away from these it becomes sparser, and trade does not penetrate because communications are almost entirely wanting, thus taking away all incentive from the people to produce beyond their immediate wants. It should always be borne in mind, in dealing with China, that paucity of population is a very imperfect index to the potentialities of any district which is not in communication with the outer world. Scantiness of population does not at all imply absence of mineral and other latent wealth, and affords a poor test of the character of the soil.

The use of coal in the household and the arts has been carried to great perfection.* Anthracite is powdered and mixed with wet clay, earth, sawdust, or dung, according to the exigencies of the case, says Williams, in the proportion of about seven to one, the balls thus made being dried in the sun. The brick-beds (*kang*) are effective means of warming the house, and the hand furnaces enable the poor to cook with these balls, aided by a little charcoal, at a trifling expense. Owing to the extremely bad state of the means of communication, however, only those who live in close vicinity to coal-mines can derive benefit from them; while to others who live at a

* Marco Polo notices its use: "It is a fact," says the Venetian, "that all over the country of Cathay, there is a kind of black stone existing in beds in the mountains, which they dig out and burn like firewood. It is true that they have plenty of wood also, but they do not burn it, because those stones burn better and cost less."—YULE'S *Marco Polo*, vol. i. p. 395.

day's walk from the mine coal is a luxury for which they can no longer afford to pay. Coal, which costs in Shansi 13 cents per ton at the mine, rises to 4 taels at a distance of thirty, and to 7 taels at sixty miles. Thus the price increases 1 tael per ton in every ten miles.*

Throughout the north of Chihli coal is plentiful. At the extensive collieries of Kaiping the mines are worked on a European model and produce excellent coal, and the out-turn could be immensely increased. At one place, Chaitang, Richthofen walked over a regular procession of coal-bearing strata, the thickness of which he estimated as exceeding 7000 feet. At Taigan shan the beds are of greater value than any in the neighbourhood of Peking. The coal at both these places is anthracite.

Regarding the basin of Taiyuen fu, Richthofen says that coal is abundant everywhere, and in most places worth little more than the cost of transportation. All the coal occurring in the vicinity is bituminous and of extremely good quality. The beds are numerous, those worked being generally from 3 to 5 feet thick, but in some instances 8 and even 10 feet. Owing to their horizontal position, the outcroppings being exposed to view on the hillside, mining is extraordinarily easy. Most of the coal-seams, too, are overlain by hard sandstone,

* Where coal is conveyed by land, it soon reaches such a price as to render its use impossible. Coal production is cheap—about 6*d*. per ton—and, therefore, improved machinery is not wanted, at least not so long as the want of means of communication lasts.—RICHTHOFEN.

forming a solid roof in the mines, which only needs to be supported by coal-pillars, thus reducing the expense for timbering to a minimum.

Of another coalfield, Pingting chau, the same authority says that the present mines constitute a narrow and crooked belt, following the line along which the coal measures crop out, and that the coal-bearing strata extend to the west, south-west, and north, practically through almost the whole of southern Shansi. Adits, miles in length, could be driven within the body of the coal, underneath great thicknesses of superincumbent strata. It is probable that all, or nearly all, the anthracite-beds would here be worth extracting. Mining is therefore capable of a practically almost unlimited extension. These conditions are altogether abnormal, and when a railroad is built from the plain to this district, branches will be carried through the body of these beds of anthracite, among the thickest and most valuable in the world. In this way the output of the coal-beds will be loaded direct on railroad cars to be railed to distant places, and extensive deposits of iron ore and clay could also be exploited.

Shansi is one of the most remarkable coal and iron regions in existence. At the present rate of consumption the world could be supplied with coal for thousands of years from Shansi alone, in Richthofen's opinion. And speaking of Professor Dana's comparison of the proportions in various countries of the area of coal land to the total area, where the State of Pennsylvania is given as leading the

world with its 43,960 square miles embracing 20,000 of coal land, Richthofen says the province of Shansi will take the palm from Pennsylvania, and by a relatively greater proportion. Nor is its extent the only advantage possessed by the Chinese coalfield, the ease and cheapness with which coal can be extracted being a remarkable feature. This region, however, labours under the disadvantage of being situated at a distance from the coast and from navigable rivers ; and the coal formation lies a few thousand feet above the adjoining plain, a difficulty which will have to be overcome by the railroads required for the exploitation of the mineral wealth of Shansi.

At the present moment, since the destruction by fire of the mines upon which the Hanyang Ironworks were dependent, there exist practically but two sources from which a supply for exportation is drawn—Kaiping and Hankau. In addition to these a small quantity from Tszechau fu, in Shansi, finds its way every year to the Yangtsze in spite of the heavy taxation in transit and difficult transport. Were the Kaiping mines properly worked under complete foreign control, they would long since have secured a share of the trade which now goes to Japan, for the coal produced is of good quality and might be laid down at moderate prices in Shanghai.*

* An account of the actual and potential coal resources of some of the chief districts of China has been given (April 1898) by the correspondent of the *Times*, to whom I am indebted for valuable information.

As regards the coal which reaches Hankau from south-east Hunan, its present price at Shanghai is 9 taels per ton, but neither supply nor price can be counted upon. The district of Luiyang, from which the famous coal of this name comes, forms the most important mining centre of a region which is broadly estimated as extending over 20,000 square miles. It is from this source that the future coal supply of central China must chiefly be drawn, and it is the existence of this vast field, in addition to the commercial capacities of so populous a region, which renders the opening of Hunan to foreign enterprise a matter of such importance. The coal has long been worked in many localities, under the primitive methods of Chinese surface mining, for purposes of local supply, and a varying quantity (probably some 200,000 tons a year) is sent to Hankau, four hundred and thirty miles distant. The Luiyang and Yungling mines are capable of producing an unlimited supply, the cost of which would become nominal with good communications and scientific methods of production.

In Honan the fields bordering on the line of the proposed Luhan Railway, *i.e.*, the Peking-Hankau line, produce an excellent quality of bituminous coal, sold at about 3*s.* at the mines, and iron ore occurs profusely throughout the coal-bearing strata of this district, while in north Honan there is also an anthracite belt. Coal from these mines finds its way to the Yellow River and the Wei, both thirty miles distant, where it commands a price five times that paid at the pit-mouth.

In Shansi, still bordering on the Luhan Railway line, lies the great coal and iron region of Tszechau fu, favourably situated as a distributing centre. In northern Shensi, also rich in coal, the difficulties of transportation place it entirely beyond the reach of any but the adjacent places. The coal formation in the bottom of ravines cut through the cover of loess is so similar to that of Shansi as, in Richthofen's opinion, to make it probable that the tablelands of coal extend over the greater portion of northern Shensi. Although little is generally known regarding the minerals of China, a comprehensive list of these, based on Chinese sources, is given by Pumpelly.*

The same methods witnessed by Richthofen for extracting the metals in Tszechau were probably, in his opinion, applied several thousand years ago. They bear the character of nearly all Chinese industry, being primitive and imperfect, and yet producing good results. The trains of mules and men encountered on the road, he says, laden with ironware of the most varied description, prepare the traveller to see the metal manufactured on a large scale; and it is surprising, on arrival at the spot, to see hundreds of small establishments, between which the labour is divided, each of them manufacturing a certain set of articles for which they may have gained a reputation. It is evident that the great success which the iron manufacturers of

* "Geological Researches in China, Mongolia, and Japan." R. Pumpelly.

Tszechau attain, by application of apparently the rudest methods, must be due in a great measure to the superiority of the material they employ. It is the few hundred feet of productive coal formation which furnishes them with an abundance of every kind of material they require—namely, an iron ore of great purity, rich in metal and easily fusible; all sorts of clay and sand, such as are required for crucibles, moulds, etc.; and an anthracite of a superior quality.

The best information regarding the province of Shantung is in the pages of Williamson, who found four great coal-fields in this province with mines in active operation, in addition to several lesser ones; he also found places where coal exists, but where mining is interdicted. The chief among the great coal-producing districts of Shantung is the valley of the Laufu ho, which runs north and south, the hills on the west side being perforated with coal-pits. Several varieties are extracted: fine bituminous coal, or partly bituminous and partly anthracite, gas-coal, and others difficult to classify. This district is famous throughout the province, and supplies the neighbouring towns and cities. At Poshan coke is manufactured in large quantities for exportation, being used for smelting silver and for purposes where great heat is required. Another field is a little to the south of Yichau fu, the coal being of inferior quality, and a third is the Wei hien district. The fourth field is twelve miles north of Yi hien, where the coal is excellent, coal being also found

near the eastern gate of Kiao chau. Judging from the direction of the prevailing mountain ranges and their geological features, it is probable that coal exists throughout the whole of the centre and west of Shantung.

Iron ore and ironstone of many descriptions have been found in several places far removed from one another, and in such positions as to indicate their wide distribution. Very fine ore, viz., the black oxide of iron, exists in Shantung. Iron ore of a somewhat different description has also been procured from the hill called King-kwo shan, about fifty *li* south-east of Tungchau.

Gold is found in many provinces, Manchuria, Shantung and the western highlands deserving special mention. Gold washings on the Han River, in Hupei, are noticed by Richthofen, where he found that seven men wash twenty tons of gravel a day, with an average yield in gold of about three and a half to four cents a ton.

The mineral wealth of the two south-west provinces, Yunnan and Kweichau, is very great and varied, and is unequalled throughout China.* Coal of excellent quality occurs in various parts of Yunnan; salt is found in the hills, not in wells as in Szechuan. Lead, iron, tin, zinc are exported. Iron and coal are found everywhere in abundance, as well as copper, sulphur, mineral oil, mercury, cinnabar, and other valuable minerals, which the broken nature of the ground brings to the surface.

* See chapter v.

Here, as elsewhere in China, water is the great difficulty in iron, coal, and mercury mining, many very productive mines being hopelessly flooded. But the mines cannot be successfully worked until there are railways to convey the output to a market.

The chief copper and lead mines are situated between the provinces of Hupei and Hunan, in south China, and besides the metal supplied from these mines, copper is sent to Peking from Yunnan and Kweichau. Copper ore has been found east of Chifu, and there is reason to believe that it exists elsewhere in Shantung and several other provinces.

The salt-works of Lutswun supply Shansi, northern Shensi, and the greater portions of Kansu and Honan. The amount extracted yearly, supposing the figure arrived at to be correct, would hardly appear, in the opinion of Richthofen, to be sufficient for the population of those regions. But there are other sources of supply. In the valleys of Hinchau, Taiyuen fu, Pingyang fu, Sian fu—in fact in every large loess-basin—salt is made, but of very inferior quality, having a brown colour and a bitter taste. It is sold at a price ranging from seven to twenty cash a cattie, and is only used by the poor. A portion of Shansi is also provided with salt from Tientsin.

The salt industry evidences Chinese ingenuity in a striking way. The sale of salt is a Government monopoly, the entire revenue from salt raised by the

Chinese Government being about 13,659,000 taels. The annual consumption for China is estimated to be over 33,000,000,000 lbs., the importation of foreign salt being prohibited. The United States Consul-General at Shanghai has recently given an interesting account, which embodies the information collected by Baber, Richthofen, and other travellers.

"The ingenuity which, seventeen hundred years ago, bored through solid rock to the depth of from 2000 to 5000 feet attests scientific skill that may still interest. The salt wells of China are found in Szechuan, Yunnan, and Shansi; but the more important are near the city of Tzelintsing, in the province of Szechuan, about 175 miles west of Chungking and an equal distance south-east of Chêngtu. The salt belt is a triangular tract, having the Min River, from Chingting fu to its junction with the Yangtsze at Sui-fu, for its base, and its apex near Tzelintsing, an area of some 1500 miles. The number of wells in this region, officially reported, are 1200, but the number is larger and by some estimated as high as 5000. They average about six inches in diameter, and vary in depth from 700 to 5000 feet, though there is one well reported to be 5900 feet deep."

Tea is still the largest element in the foreign trade, although rapidly diminishing on account of the competition from India. Its use in China is not so universal as imagined: in the north and west the people use preparations in which tea forms a small proportion, or else drink hot water. The "brick tea" for the Mongolian and Tibetan markets is principally prepared at Hankau. For the better qualities the Russians invariably outbid the English, and the finest kinds are consumed either in China or in Russia, where the upper

classes are prepared to pay heavily for a fine tea, just as, in the West, high prices are paid for a choice wine. Tea was used as a beverage, in the earlier centuries of our era, in China, whence a knowledge of the plant was carried to Japan, where the cultivation was established in the thirteenth century. The indigenous tea-tree, believed by botanists to be the parent species, is found in Assam.

Insect wax is exported to some extent from Szechuan, and the supply from that province, and from Yunnan and Kweichau, is capable of indefinite expansion, according to Bourne.

Unlike those of their kind in Szechuan, the wax insects of Shantung breed and become productive in the same districts. They are placed upon the trees in the spring, and at the close of the summer they void a peculiar substance which, when melted, forms wax. In the autumn they are taken off the trees, and are preserved within doors until the following spring.

The history of tobacco in China is very curious, showing how rapidly a narcotic can spread. Some three hundred years ago it came from Japan, doubtless introduced there by the Portuguese or Dutch, to Corea. Thence it was introduced into Manchuria, and, when the present Manchu dynasty ascended the throne (A.D. 1664), thence into China. Its use is now universal, the Manchurian tobacco being famous throughout China.

The question of labour is one of great importance.

A Chinese coolie can be employed for from six to eight dollars a month, and considering his greater strength and endurance, he is a cheaper servant at these rates, either in or out of his own country, than the ordinary native of India. The people are sturdy and well built, those of north China being stronger than those of the south, and more civil to foreigners. The poorer classes live almost entirely on rice and vegetables, to which they sometimes add small pieces of fish and meat. An artisan's wages vary, according to his skill, from 5*d.* to 10*d.* per diem. As a rule they are diligent workmen, being good carpenters, slow bricklayers, excellent stone-cutters, very fair navvies, indifferent blacksmiths, and bad at forge work and iron work generally. They do not appreciate the necessity of exactness or of fixing work truly in a lathe, but they have considerable powers of imitation. They are indifferent miners. When working by contract meals are provided on the premises. They work generally nine hours a day, lunching about noon, and dining after the day's work is done, usually on rice, fish, and vegetables.

Workmen are divided into guilds, are turbulent unless kept in subjection, and often combine to raise their wages. The artisans of the south are superior to those of north China in skill and activity. The great bulk of the people (two-thirds) are employed in productive labour—*i.e.*, agriculture and fisheries, one-tenth of the whole population probably gaining a livelihood by the latter industry.

About one-third are manufacturers, tradesmen, or are engaged in commerce. The extremely over-populated condition of certain sections of the country has had a powerful influence in moulding the national character. Under the existing conditions China cannot support her people; hence large numbers of the inhabitants are compelled either to emigrate* or to live in boats on the rivers and lakes.

The Chinese immigration into Mongol territory, which commenced some centuries ago, was at first a purely political measure, the Emperor Kanghi especially fostering it by deporting criminals and building fortified cities. But the most rapid progress in the way of spontaneous colonisation appears to have been made in the last decade. While the Chinese in Manchuria have succeeded in assimilating themselves by inter-marriage with the ruling race, they can gain upon the Mongols only by pushing them back, for no inter-marriage takes place, and the Mongols, unlike the Manchus, do not assume the Chinese language and literature.

As regards opium, the most marked feature and

* "Legalised coolie emigration from China," says Cordier, "was first initiated in 1859 by Peh-kwei, Governor of Kwangtung, acting under the influence of the British and French authorities then in military occupation of the city of Canton, and was conducted under regulations drawn up by the Allies and the Chinese authorities." It was not till 1866 that a Code of Regulations, agreed to by Sir Rutherford Alcock and Prince Kung, was drawn up in the form of a Convention, and promulgated.

the one which concerns us most, for it involves the loss of a large income to England, is the decrease in the import of the Indian article. There cannot be any doubt that the foreign drug will be driven, slowly perhaps, but steadily, by native competition from the China market. The records of the foreign Customs and the consular service and the testimony of travellers and missionaries supply evidence on this point which cannot be doubted. The process is seen in full operation in the north, notwithstanding that the prices of foreign opium have been greatly reduced. Szechuan opium is also supplanting the foreign drug on the Yangtsze, the distribution being largely carried on through boatmen and land smugglers. In Formosa and south China generally, though the decline of opium imported through the Customs is marked, the consumption is said to be not greatly on the decrease, owing presumably to contraband supplies. The native article does not as yet interfere largely with the foreign drug. The reason for this is simple. The opium of distant Yunnan and Szechuan cannot yet compete with the adulterated Indian opium, as sold at the ports of Formosa, Amoy, Swatau, Pakhoi or Hoihau, where it is delivered principally by means of junks from Singapore and Hongkong; mainly, of course, from the latter place. It resolves itself into a simple question of cost and carriage.

Without entering fully into the controversy regarding this burning question of opium, too important to be discussed hastily, a few words on the subject are necessary. The truth is to be found in no

violent extremes, but in the happy mean. So far we have had two quite antagonistic views presented to us: the missionary view, adopted by the Anti-Opium League, and the official or consular view, adopted by the Government of India. Read one, and you learn that the practice brings ruin to the "teeming millions" of China. Listen to the other, and you are told that it is quite a healthful custom, about as harmless as the use of tobacco, and suited to the idiosyncrasies of the Chinese constitution. This, of course, is not the letter but it is the spirit of their opinions. Now, I shall not sketch the horrors of the "black smoke," nor picture the abominations of the "opium-den," which have been greatly exaggerated. I have seen opium-dens in many large Chinese cities, and as bad, if not worse, can be seen any day in Constantinople and elsewhere. On the other hand, I am not among those who can defend the practice, for I have witnessed under exceptional circumstances—while on the march with soldiers and muleteers, or living with peasant and trader, when entertained in the official yamên or lodging in the common hostelry—the evil effects produced by it on the people of China.* On the more southern peoples of Tongking,

* On this subject Huc says: "They take to it greedily; and when once the habit of smoking becomes confirmed, the difficulty of relinquishing it is exceedingly great. There has, no doubt, been much exaggeration in what has been talked and written on this subject. But on the testimony of Chinamen themselves, the effects of opium-smoking must be regarded as injurious to health, and destructive to all the better parts of man's nature. Indulging in it prostitutes the intellectual and moral faculties."

Annam, Cochin-China, Siam, Cambodia and Burma, with all of whom I am acquainted, the result shows itself more rapidly and the effect is more fatal.* Neither physically nor morally can they, as regards opium, "stay" like the Chinaman. That the habit is pernicious, capable of great abuse, and that it saps away the energies of body and mind, I am convinced. But this opinion is founded merely upon personal observation. To accurately ascertain the effects of opium, what is greatly wanted is some precise scientific system of inquiry.

Sir Robert Hart some years ago evolved an elaborate calculation as to the number of opium-smokers in China, based upon the average number of pipes, and therefore opium, consumed by the average regular smoker. In this way he ascertained that only two-thirds of one per cent of the population, or only some 2,000,000 Chinamen, smoked opium. Such an estimate, however, would hardly appear reasonable to any one who has travelled in China. The *data* were insufficient, the evident weak point being the degree of adulteration practised, which varies greatly, thus affecting the average amount consumed.

In discussing the evil effects of opium we are far too apt to forget that there is such a thing in our own country as drunkenness. The Chinaman, like men of other races, insists upon indulging in some stimulant or narcotic, and he has

* Behn-sah, or opium-smoker, is the greatest term of reproach that can be applied to a Burman.

chosen opium. He is by no means a teetotaler, as usually assumed; abstinence societies exist in China. Still, the Chinaman generally does not indulge in beer or wine,* and his *samshu* is a weakly substitute. The vice which it pleases him to indulge is therefore opium. We have not yet succeeded in introducing temperance, far less abstinence, into England, and one might as soon expect the average Briton to give up his beer or spirits as the Chinaman his pipe. In neither case can man be made moral by Act of Parliament. In any case, no reform is likely to come from the mandarinate, who are almost without exception slaves to the habit, while the few free from it are powerless against it. Reform must come, if ever it does, from the people themselves. If not altogether a sincere belief with Chinamen, it is at least a highly convenient argument, and much used by them, that we are largely responsible for the prevalence of the habit; and not only the officials and *literati*, but even a few foreigners, have done their best to foster the idea. True or not, the charge is one difficult to meet so long as Govern-

* According to Dr. Martin, "liquor makes a man noisy and furious, opium makes him quiet and rational. The drinker commits crime when he has too much, the opium-smoker when he has too little. . . . Alcohol imprints on the face a fiery glow; opium an ashy paleness. Alcoholic drinks bloat and fatten; opium emaciates. A drunkard may work well if kept from his cups; an opium-smoker is good for nothing until he has had his pipe. It takes years for alcohol to reduce a man to slavery; opium rivets its fetters in a few weeks or months. It does not take the place of either tobacco or alcoholic drinks."—*A Cycle of Cathay*.

ment preserves its present attitude with regard to Indian opium.

That the Chinese are taking any serious steps towards the suppression of the drug is not to be credited, least of all by any one who has traversed the interior of China. Like the Abbé Huc, from personal experience gained in Chinese travel every observer can say, "Pendant notre long voyage en Chine, nous n'avons pas rencontré un seul tribunal où on ne fumât l'opium ouvertement et impunément." It is found, in many provinces, growing under the walls of nearly every yamên or court-house. All travellers are agreed in this, that Yunnan and Szechuan opium is rapidly increasing in quantity and improving in quality. It is fast forcing its way to the seaboard, being already brought there and shipped along the coast, although as yet in small quantities. The poppy is spreading over other provinces,* and as the value of the crop

* A Chinese censor in 1830 represented to the Throne that the poppy was grown over one-half the province of Chekiang, and in 1836 another stated that the annual produce of opium in Yunnan could not be less than several thousand piculs. In 1884 it was estimated that south-west China, including Szechuan, produced not less than 224,000 piculs, while the entire import from India did not exceed 100,000. Opium-smoking seemingly commenced in China forty or fifty years before the English began to import opium into that country. Referring to Yunnan and Kweichau, Bourne was told that: "About five generations here had smoked opium. Cultivation of the poppy begun on an extensive scale at the end of the reign of K'ien-lung (1796). Then opium was worth its weight in silver." "If this be true," Bourne remarks, "one can readily understand how, as the habit spread east, the Canton merchants would have made inquiry of the East India Company's factors in Canton, and how there would have been a trial shipment from India."

is double that of wheat, it is fast replacing that dry-weather crop. The use of the Indian drug since the improvement of the native article is becoming, slowly but surely, a luxury only for the more affluent trader or official. Perfected still more, fashion will give its *imprimatur* to the native article, and then the foreign drug will be doomed.

Silk of varying quality is grown in most provinces of China. Steam filatures, of which there are 25, having 8040 spindles, have been established under European management in Chifu, Shanghai, Chinkiang, Hankau, and Canton, and have greatly developed the silk trade.

The cotton-growing country stretches from Shanghai to Hankau, and thence to Ichang. Northern Szechuan also grows cotton. Raw cotton is not grown chiefly in China. There are at present 13 cotton mills at work, and the erection of others has already been commenced. The number of spindles is 417,000, and of looms 2100. The output of these mills is large and already has become one of the important factors in the industrial development of the Far East.*

The Western world got many things from China, and many others were in use in the Chinese Empire before they were known to us. The mariner's compass, gunpowder, the use of the umbrella, belong to the first category, and possibly some of the following also: the system of Civil Service examinations, the early telegraph (signal towers), bull fights, theatres,

* See chapter v.

novels, the census, the rotation of crops, printing, incubators, banknotes, newspapers, and inoculation for small-pox.

The mineral wealth of China, perhaps the greatest of any country on the world's surface, is as yet hardly touched, while there is a vast store of human energy in the people of China to develop that wealth. A great force at present runs to waste in the shape of the waterpower, the numberless waterfalls and waterways, at present unutilised.

In reviewing the general economic condition of the Chinese Empire we cannot fail to be struck by the fact that, though progress has been at a standstill for centuries, many of the products of China not only hold their own in the markets of the world, but are in some cases unrivalled. Again, though the tools used by the Chinese in their manufactures and arts are as a rule most primitive, the results are remarkable, and sometimes beyond the reach of the European with his improved methods and up-to-date machinery and mechanism. If the Chinese have been able to accomplish so much with so little adventitious aid, it surely requires no great foresight to be able to foretell that, when the spirit of progress is really abroad in the land, when modern improvements and methods are studied and adopted by the people, the Chinaman will occupy a leading position among his contemporaries in the world of commerce and manufacture.

CHAPTER IV

THE QUESTION OF COMMUNICATIONS

The first organic need of all civilised States, and pre-eminently so in a country so vast and so various in its terrestrial conditions as China, is arterial communication. This need has been fully recognised by its rulers, who have from time to time made serious efforts to connect the most distant parts of the Empire by both land and water routes.

The "Grand Canal" or Yun ho, so often spoken of by travellers in past times, is, in its way, as great a monument of human industry as the Great Wall, although perhaps at first sight it may seem less wonderful. Not a canal in the Western sense of the word, it is merely, as has been explained, "a series of abandoned river-beds, lakes, and marshes, connected one with another by cuttings of no importance, fed by the Wan ho (or Tawan ho) in Shantung, which divides into two currents at its summit, and by other streams and rivers along its course. A part of the water of the Wan ho descends towards the Hoang ho and Gulf of Pechihli; the larger part runs south in the direction of the Yangtsze." *

It has generally the aspect of a winding river, of

* Richthofen.

varying width. As related by Marco Polo,* the Emperor Kublai Khan, towards the end of the thirteenth century, created the Yun-ho, *i.e.*, "River of Transports," as it was named, chiefly by connecting river with river, lake with lake. Even before that epoch goods were conveyed partly by water and partly by land from the Yangtsze to the Pei ho basin. The Grand Canal connects Hangchau, in Chekiang, with Tientsin, in Chihli, where it unites with the Pei ho, and thus may be said to extend to Tungchau, in the neighbourhood of Peking. After leaving Hangchau, it skirts the eastern border of the Tai hu, or Great Lake, surrounding, in its course, the beautiful city of Suchau, and then runs in a north-westerly direction through the fertile districts of Kiangsu as far as Chinkiang, on the Yangtsze. Thence it passes through Kiangsu, Anhwei, Shantung, and Chihli, to Tientsin. When the canal was in order, before the inflow of the Yellow River failed, there was uninterrupted water communication from Peking to Canton, and to the many cities and towns met with *en route.*

For many years past, but especially since the carriage of tribute-rice by steamers along the coast began, repairs to the Grand Canal have been practically abandoned. Numberless instances of the

* "You must understand," says Marco Polo, "that the Emperor has caused a water communication to be made from this city (Kwachau) to Cambaluc, in the shape of a wide and deep channel dug between stream and stream, lake and lake, forming, as it were, a great river on which large vessels can ply."—YULE'S *Marco Polo*, vol. ii. p. 136.

manner in which the waterways and the river embankments are neglected could be given. Nothing is attempted till too late, and several hundred coolies, sometimes thousands, are requisitioned and hurried off to undertake what could be done by a few men and a little application of mechanical skill, if taken in time. The higher waters of the streams and rivers are difficult to navigate. But the absence of cataracts, the cheapness of wages, and the small value of time, and even of life, it may be said, make it possible for the Chinese to employ boat navigation advantageously where the difficulty, expense, and risk would make it a sheer impossibility in any part of Europe. The Chinaman drags his boat over rapids that in most countries would form an absolute barrier to navigation. He takes them across shallows only a couple of inches deep and flowing with great velocity over a pebbly or shingly bottom. The amount of freight carried in this manner in the face of almost superhuman difficulties is astounding. Little has been attempted to maintain, nothing has been done to improve, either by land or water, the inter-provincial communications, the urgent necessity above all else for China.

The roads in China, confined generally to the northern and western sections of the country, are proverbially the very worst in the world. The typical western China road is a thing to be experienced, it cannot be described.

"The paving is of the usual Chinese pattern," says Baber, "rough

boulders and blocks of stone laid somewhat loosely together on the surface of the ground; 'good for ten years and bad for ten thousand,' as the Chinese proverb admits. On the level plains of China, in places where the population is sufficiently affluent to subscribe for occasional repairs, this system has much practical value. But in the Yunnan Mountains the roads are never repaired; so far from it, the indigent natives extract the most convenient blocks to stop the holes in their hovel walls, or to build a fence on the windward side of their poppy patches. The rain soon undermines the pavement, especially where it is laid on a steep incline; whole sections of it topple down the slope, leaving chasms a yard or more in depth; and isolated fragments balance themselves here and there, with the notorious purpose of breaking a leg or spraining an ankle." *

Where travelling by water is impossible, sedan-chairs are used to carry passengers,† and coolies with poles and slings transport the luggage and goods. The distances covered by the sedan-chair porters across these highland roads are remarkable, sometimes as much as thirty-five miles daily, even on a journey extending over a month, and with only a few days' halt altogether.

The transport animals—ponies, mules, oxen, and donkeys—are very strong and hardy, and manage to drag the carts along the most execrable roads, six or eight animals being harnessed, often as a mixed

* "China," No. 3. 1878.

† "No traveller in Western China who possesses any sense of self-respect," says Baber, "should journey without a sedan-chair, not necessarily as a conveyance, but for the honour and glory of the thing. Unfurnished with this indispensable token of respectability, he is liable to be thrust aside on the highway, to be kept waiting at ferries, to be relegated to the worst inn's worst room, and generally to be treated with indignity or, what is sometimes worse, with familiarity, as a peddling footpad who, unable to gain a living in his own country, has come to subsist on China. A chair is far more effective than a passport."

team, in a cart drawing about a ton. Many descriptions of travel in a springless Chinese cart have been attempted, but no pen can reproduce the sensation. The ponies of western China are admirable, a rougher edition of the Shan or Burma pony, hardier and more enduring. The mules are unequalled in any other country. The distances ponies and mules will cover are surprising, and this on the very poorest of fodder. Their endurance and patience are equalled only by the coolies. The two-humped or Bactrian camel met with at Peking, and employed in the Mongolian trade, is characteristic of Mongolia, where the one-humped species common in Turkistan is unknown.

From Peking four high-roads branch in various directions, one leading to Urga, by way of Suenhwa fu, which traverses the Great Wall at Chankeakou; another which enters Mongolia through the Ku-pei-kou in the north-east, and after reaching Fungning proceeds with a north-westerly bearing to Dolonor; a third going due east by way of Tungchau and Yungping fu to Shanhaikwan, the point on the shore of the Gulf where the Great Wall terminates; and fourthly, one which leads, in a south-westerly direction, to Paoting fu and on to Taiyuen fu in Shansi.

The Central Asian trade route from Sian fu, turning north-west, leaving the fertile loess valley of the Wei and traversing the once rich but now devastated and depopulated hills and valleys of Shensi and Kansu as far as the confines of the Gobi Desert, passes through a country of great

agricultural wealth, possessed of a magnificent coal and probably also iron supply. The only line of approach for a railway from Central Asia to central China and the Yangtsze basin is the present cart-road from Sian, leading south of the Yellow River to Honan, Funcheng and Hankau. From its favourable position, Honan, according to Colonel Mark Bell,* is destined to be a great future railway centre, for thence at least two good lines can be carried to Hankau, while it is an easy passage *viâ* Kaifong to Peking. The iron and coal of Shansi can be tapped by a line from Tungkwan up the valley of the Fuenho to Taiyuen fu and beyond. The tunnelling required in the Shansi hills for a line to Peking could pass through strata of coal, which is also found in northern Shensi. Richthofen very properly lays special stress upon the value of the Tungkwan road, as "of supreme importance in a political and strategical respect, as it mediates, without exception, the entire traffic between the south-west of the Empire (Szechuan, Yunnan, and Tibet) and Peking, together with the whole north-east. It is one of the chief roads of travel in China, and the greatest military road."

The commercial importance of the Wei Valley is emphasised by Richthofen and other travellers. It is the centre of gravity and also resistance of Mid-China; cut off, however, from the rest of the Empire by mountainous or hilly regions, it is at present most difficult to reach.

* *Asiatic Quarterly Review*, April 1890.

The chief causes of the backward and decaying condition of the northern as compared with the central and southern provinces seem to be these: (1) The deterioration of the climate, due to the persistent destruction of the forests, and failure to take any steps to renew them. In the north, for example from Hankau to Peking, mountains and hills are destitute of trees and shrubs, and present a most forbidding appearance. (2) The neglected state of the means of inter-communication.* When the country was flourishing, some of the roads were in a fairly good condition; now they are almost impassable. Hence the congested state of certain districts in the north, especially Honan.

The three great enemies of the supreme Government in China have been famine, provincial autonomy and rebellion. Famines are caused in China by various calamities. Locusts and rats may devour the growing crop of a whole province; deficient rainfall may prevent the crops, particularly on the loess, from coming to maturity; or unseasonable snow on the highlands or heavy and continuous rainfall may breach the dykes and cause inundation, thus bringing starvation and its accompanying horrors home to millions. China, however, is a land of such variety and contrast that, though there may be famine in one or more provinces, at

* Coal, in Shansi costing thirteen cents per ton at the mine, is four taels at thirty miles distance, and over seven taels at sixty miles.

the same time there may be abundance in neighbouring ones. But here, as elsewhere, without communications, a failure of the local crops means famine; while a bumper harvest depreciates the value of the produce, so as scarcely to repay the labour of reaping. It is mainly the difficulty encountered by the Government in transporting the food supply that leads to the terrible loss of life. To carry for long distances the enormous amount of grain required, over terribly defective roads—especially in the north, where no good waterway exists—is an impossible task.

The story of the 1878 famine illustrates well what such a calamity means in China. In that year Shansi and large portions of Chihli, Shensi, Shantung, and Honan were suffering at the same time from famine. In Shansi it was at its worst. The people there were hemmed in by a belt of famine-stricken country which it took weeks to cross. The poor peasantry clung to their homes until their last *cash* was spent, praying each day for rain that never came, and vainly awaiting the Government relief. At last, penniless and weakened by starvation, they started—some with wives and children, but generally abandoning these—on their march to reach the food districts. Few succeeded. A consular officer, despatched on a merciful mission, says that of the thousands who thus attempted to escape only those on the outer confines of the famine district succeeded in doing so. The Chinese Government has been the subject of considerable opprobrium in connection

with famines, but its character for apathy and incapacity is not altogether deserved. The history of Indian famines should make us reflect before we too severely blame the Chinese Government for its want of success in famine relief. The system and appliances were faulty. The Government, finding itself powerless to deal with the transport, was compelled to attempt relief by distributing money. The cost of cart transport from the Chihli plain to Shansi was officially stated to be £12 per ton! In addition to want of communications, official corruption, as usual, found its opportunity. Thus came about the strange anomaly that, while people were suffering from starvation, relief was generally given in money rather than grain. When money began to fail, and general starvation set in, the Government imported silver as fast as it could, impressing into the service all available carts and animals. But the official rate of hire is considerably below the ordinary one, and there are other obvious reasons why Government work is unpopular in China. The transport owners, therefore, avoided all parts where "requisition" was liable to be enforced, and the Government scheme of transport was brought to a standstill. The rates were then raised to the market standard, but much time had been lost, and in the meantime thousands upon thousands died from want. The wolves attacked not only children, but adults, in broad daylight and in the village streets. There is no need to dwell further upon the horrible scene; it is sufficient to

state that the consumption of human flesh became a practice, and grew to frightful proportions, it being stated that five people out of ten in Shansi learnt its taste.

So long as China was absolutely cut off from the rest of the world, so long, even, as she was not impinged upon or hemmed in, as she now is, by Western Powers, it was quite possible for the Empire to hold together, loose as the system was throughout. But two disintegrating processes have been at work. While, on the one hand, foreign nations have closed in upon China both by sea and land, internal communications have been gradually falling into greater and greater neglect. The growing weakness of the Peking Government has, for a long time past, been becoming more and more apparent to the people and the officials, whose confidence had been completely shaken, even before the shock of recent events. The enfeebled control exercised over most of the eighteen provinces, especially over those remote from the capital, is largely due to Peking being at the extremity of the country and to the defective condition of the communications. "Chinese" Gordon laid great stress on the importance of having the capital central, and he was right. The influence of the Peking Government is exhausted before it can reach the southern and western provinces. The same cause that kills trade on its way inland paralyses the authority of Peking a few hundred miles from the capital. Absence of communication

means failure of control, lack of power, want of grip; causes which chiefly contribute to the frequent occurrence of rebellions.

If communications are a necessity to the Government in checking famine, crushing the secret societies which sow the seeds of rebellion, and generally in effecting good government, their value for purposes of defence and in time of war can hardly be overestimated. The importance of railways in wartime has been fully illustrated in Europe, especially in the Franco-German campaign, and was lately exemplified in Japan. The rapidity and persistency with which, in face of grave financial difficulties, Germany, Austria, Russia, and the Indian Government have for years been laying down strategic lines shows the confidence felt in their value. This lesson should have been taken to heart by China, which should have adopted organisation under Western guidance. To have had the power at the beginning of the Chino-Japanese War of concentrating on the northern border, suddenly and without fear of interruption, a European-drilled army, however small, might have prevented things drifting into a serious war; and Russia might have thought twice before executing the *coup de main* on the Liaotung peninsula and Port Arthur.

Much remains to be accomplished by steam navigation, though the rapid adoption of steamers along the coast and on the Yangtsze has paved the way for the railway. Shallow steamers have yet to traverse the Poyang and Tungting lakes, which lie

next the Yangtsze, and the Pei ho and Canton rivers, as well as many minor streams. But it is railways that are the supreme necessity. Except along the Yangtsze, for the thousand-odd miles now covered by steamers, there is no single trade route of importance in China where a railway would not pay. Especially would a line from Peking, carried through the heart of China to the extreme south, along the existing trade highways, be advantageous and remunerative. The plain-lands, with defective waterways where small craft only are now available; even the tablelands, less peopled than the river valleys, yet often rich, could profitably be covered with railways. The enormous traffic carried on throughout the Empire, in the face of appalling difficulties, on men's backs, by caravans of mules or ponies, by the rudest of carts and wheelbarrows, must be some day undertaken by the railway. It is matter for regret that the few Chinese apostles of progress should have laid such importance on the introduction of the railway for strategic purposes only. In the interests of Europe and of China herself, such lines are less to be desired than inter-provincial trunk-lines, highways designed for administration and commerce. In such free transit throughout the Empire, China would have found wiser and safer means of defence. It was only by opening the Empire and peacefully developing its resources, thereby giving to all foreign nations a commercial interest in the country, that safety was to be found. It is only by such measures that the *sudden* disso-

lution of China can now be avoided. Nothing, perhaps, can prevent its eventual break-up.

The basis of railway construction should be the development of the internal or inter-provincial trade of China, the interchange of the varied products of a country boasting so many climates and soils. This would bring prosperity to the people, render administrative reform possible, and open China "for the Chinese," quite as much as for the European merchant or manufacturer; and this should be the aim of Chinese statesmen. Thus would be avoided the enormous waste of capital which has occurred in England, where double the requisite amount has been expended owing to want of system. Consider the advantages to be gained. Here is a country of marvellous resources, with a population intelligent, peaceful, industrious, and well disposed to migration, and yet the existing means of transport, whether by road or canal, are failing or disused. Once judiciously begun, who can doubt the rapid and profitable extension of the railway throughout China?

As regards the Yangtsze basin, what remains to be done, first by steam navigation and secondly by railways, will be dealt with later on. It is a mistake to assume, as is usually done, that where good water communications exist railways cannot advantageously be laid down. Instances are numerous where such railways have not only paid, but have even led to an increase in the river traffic; for example, on some American rivers, on the Ganges, the Irrawaddy, and the Rhine. But it is not

necessary now to discuss this question at length. There are more pressing needs, as for instance the "inter-provincial" railways advocated by the writer. The most important lines for China are two that would connect Peking, Tientsin and all northern China with central and southern China. Through trunk lines can be carried out for this object without any difficulty. They would pass along the old-established trade routes, with populous cities the whole way; through eastern Shansi and Honan down the Han Valley to Hankau, on the Yangtsze, through the Great Plain to Chinkiang, thence to the Si kiang and Canton. Such lines would be shafts driven through the heart of China, connecting north and south. For the entire distance, some thirteen hundred or fourteen hundred miles, the extent, fertility, and variety of the soil, passing through a region happily situated between the extremes of heat and cold, is remarkable. From the north, abounding in cotton and varieties of grain and pulse, to the south, where so many vegetable products of the East are met, the redundant population is the striking feature. A constant succession of villages, towns, and cities, already the scene of industry and peddling trade, would soon be transformed into a picture of bustle and business. Hankau would be one central terminus of this railway system and Chinkiang another. Many proposed lines, such as from Shanghai to Hangchau and Suchau, and from Canton to Kaulun, would have various advantages to recommend them, but they are all local. The

trunk lines, alone, would be the regenerator of China. They would galvanise the trade of the interior, reveal the land-locked provinces, and really "open up" the Empire.

The first railway actually opened in China was the small line from Wusung to Shanghai, laid down in 1876 by English merchants, and a year later acquired by the local authorities, the line being taken up and the materials removed to Formosa and the north. The next railway had its beginning in a small line constructed, for conveyance of coal, from the Kaiping mines to the Petang River, and was gradually extended, at a very slow rate of progress, into the present railway system of some three hundred miles. The distance (twenty-seven miles) between Tientsin and Tongku, near the Taku forts at the mouth of the Pei ho, and between the latter place and the Kaiping and Tungshan coalfields, and thence beyond Shanhaikwan towards Manchuria, is now traversed by a well-constructed line laid down by English engineers. Most important of all, the railway from Tientsin to Peking, seventy-three miles in length, was opened to traffic last summer, and is likely to prove an important factor in the question of railway construction.

It has been evident to a few of the leading Chinese that the time was rapidly coming when foreigners would and must have extended freedom of intercourse with the interior of China; when, if the country were not opened up from within by the Chinese themselves, the spirit of the age, which

demands progress, or what we call progress, would be too much for her; when what was not conceded to reason would be wrung from her by the force of circumstances, culminating in the dismemberment of the Empire. The *vis inertiæ* were too great, however, and now that the Powers are moving in China, with Russia pressing forward with rapid strides, the decision of this and other questions no longer rests with the Chinese.

Great reliance seems to be placed on the opening of more treaty ports. But the indefinite multiplication of such ports in China is no panacea for the stagnation of trade. The insufficiency of the remedy has been clearly shown again and again. China can only be opened by the introduction of railways and the adoption of a system of passports, which would secure all that is requisite for the development of the country, obviate the necessity of minor agencies for foreign firms, and entail little or no expense on the part of foreign Governments. The railways would, of course, require to be managed at first and for a long time by foreigners, and this might be done by the creation of another service, such as the Imperial Customs, which, instead of opposing, would be a source of strength to the Chinese Government.

The importance of rapid, direct, and practicable communications, that would enable the Chinese to develop the resources of their territories, and to open through communication with their neighbours, thus providing new arteries of commerce, is an axiom

which should need no demonstration. These communications should satisfy industrial and commercial interests, while meeting political and administrative necessities. In the present deplorable position of China, no measure can render her greater service than the introduction of railways. It is indispensable to the preservation of the country. "Steam or anarchy," as Williamson said thirty years ago,* are the only alternatives left to the Chinese people.

* Meadows, a consular officer, writing forty years ago, indicated in the most far-seeing and prophetic work yet published on China the inevitable march of events. And Williamson, a missionary, some thirty years back, showed in a clear and comprehensive manner the practicability of railways and the necessity for their introduction: "Great numbers would find employment and good wages on the construction of the works. The traffic would gradually, as the rails were laid down, assimilate itself to the habits of the people, mines and new sources of industry would be brought into operation. The agricultural resources would be greatly developed, and commerce in all its branches would receive a powerful impulse. The increased lateral traffic would absorb the present carrying trade, railways would bring the whole Empire under the control of the Central Government, put an end to rebellions, would place commerce on a secure basis, equalise the administration of justice, modify those famines which so often threaten and so frequently paralyse portions of the Empire; moreover, they would provide means for the diffusion of knowledge. They would introduce a new element of life and activity among the people, stir up dormant energies, widen the spheres of observation, develop new views, evolve new wants, create new business, and destroy obstructive prejudices. They would increase the intercourse and harmony between Europeans and Chinese, bringing buyers and sellers face to face. They would place the transit duties—that source of so much mischief—on a satisfactory footing; and in short would, in a thousand ways, promote the advancement and happiness of the people."—*Journeys in North China.*

The people are not only prepared for railways, but these would no more disorganise Chinese society than they did that of Western countries, for it is marvellous how soon men get accustomed to changes which are for their benefit.

The extent and nature of railways for China should be modelled closely on the Indian system, which is based on fifty years' experience, the study of all known systems, and the employment of the best technical skill of the United States and Germany. There has been in India an expansion of commerce which forty years ago would have been considered impossible. The imports and exports in that time have risen from 400 to nearly 2000 million rupees (in 1896). In 1858 India was merely a dealer in drugs, dyes, and luxuries. Now she is one of the largest merchants in food grains, fibres, and many other staples. The internal economical conditions of China to-day are very much the same as those of India when railways were introduced. Contrary to expectation, the passenger traffic on the Indian railways has, from the first, exceeded the goods traffic.* China is better off per man, and the Chinese and Indo-

* The increase in business and passenger traffic on Indian railways in fifty years is as follows:

	Miles open.	No. of Passengers.	Tons of Goods.
In 1857 . . .	288½	2 millions	253,000
In 1896 . . .	20,400	160 millions	32,500,000

Chinese, unlike the natives of India, are born travellers and traders.*

In China, the problem to be solved has been how to beat down the barriers of superstition and prejudice, not insurmountable if the task had only been undertaken with courage and persistence. Similar difficulties, some sixty years ago, obstructed the introduction of the first railroad into England, and a later example offered itself in India, where official discouragement and passive obstructiveness were encountered by those who introduced the railway. And there the mandarins, the *literati*, were educated Englishmen. Even to this day it cannot be claimed that railways find too much encouragement from the Government of India. Inevitable failure was foretold there. The floods, the white ants, caste, the Eastern sun and rains, involving impossibility of maintenance, the indisposition of the people to alter their habits, and the consequent danger of rebellion—all these arguments, and many others, were employed. We know the result. The obstacles assumed to be insurmountable in India melted away before persistent and judicious effort, as they would have also in China. It was contended, too, by the officials, that no passenger traffic could ever be counted on. Yet,

* Last year, immediately after its opening, I travelled several times over the Peking-Tientsin line, and found the new means of conveyance so much in favour that crowds were travelling to and fro for the mere novelty of the thing. I was forcibly reminded of Burma, where the people seem positively to look upon railway travelling as an added joy of life.

within the first three years the passenger traffic largely exceeded the goods, and has developed in an extraordinary degree.

India has been largely developed by guaranteed lines, the State reserving the power to take over the railways after twenty-five years, or certain recurring periods, and retaining a share which varies from one-quarter to four-fifths of the net earnings. The advantage of the guarantee system is that, independently of Government budgets, it promotes rapid railway development by its ready supply of funds, which are available even in times of crises, when, otherwise, Government works would be stopped and the entire machinery for railway-making dislocated. With proper provision made for a settled rate of progress and with adequate funds, the establishments are kept at full working power, and the manifold inconveniences and waste arising from spasmodic action are avoided.

The guiding principle in India has been, and still remains, Government power of control and of purchase. The States reserves: (1) Proprietary rights; (2) A directing voice in the construction of new lines; and (3) A share in the benefits, with power to protect its own interests and to regulate competition. In practice, railways, whether in the hands of the State or of private companies, are bound to become a monopoly, and in a country like China it is imperative that they should be the State monopoly. The general good and the safety of the State demand it.

"Military" and "famine" railways have greatly reduced the average profits on Indian lines. If ordinary commercial railways had been pushed forward with greater vigour, much of this cost might have been avoided. The Government of India has made two serious mistakes—first, in adopting a 5′ 6″ gauge; and, secondly, when they found that too heavy and costly for rapid extension, by deciding on introducing the metre gauge, and China is well advised in choosing, from the outset, the standard gauge of 4′ 8½″. She would do well, also, in her methods of railway construction to follow the example of India, where all the lines are extremely well built. Generally speaking, the difficulties presented by the physical conditions are no greater in China than in India.

The Indian railways steadily increase yearly in value,* and when the lines fall in they will bring a great and constantly growing revenue to the State. Financially speaking, this is the brightest prospect before India. Egypt, too, it should be

* The earnings of Indian railways compared with others are as follows:

	Per cent.
India	5.46
Great Britain	3.60
United States	3
Australian Colonies	2–3¾

The average dividend of Burma (4 per cent.) would stand well over 5 but for the large amount of extensions going on and labour being scarce and expensive.

Railway companies pay exceedingly well in Japan. On the Government lines the net profit amounts to more than 10 per cent. on the capital.

noted, has been saved from chaos mainly by its public works, executed under English control. It thus offers a valuable object-lesson as regards China. The financial success of the Burmese railways is almost unprecedented in railway construction in India, and as the characteristics of Burma, and still more of its people, closely resemble those of China, there is strong presumptive evidence that success will attend Chinese railway construction.

The tendency in railway building is everywhere towards permanency, especially in the United States and India. The American "pioneer" class of railway is quite unsuited to either India or China. It is only in new, unpeopled countries, such as Australia and America were, that economy in first cost is a dominant consideration; in China it should be solidity. The conditions in America on the one hand and China on the other are absolutely different —especially as regards climate, density of population, the genius of the people, and the character of the government. Under the American system, the railway companies, uncontrolled and unassisted by the State, have not proved a success, even financially. Such a system would be disastrous for China, for it leads to combinations against the public interest, railway corporations often controlling the State. India, which has 20,000 miles of railway, is calculated to require 60,000 miles, and China should have at least a similar amount. The United States have one-third the mileage of the world and ten times that of India,

but in America railway-making has been, on the whole, overdone.

A point of importance to China is that, out of the 260,000 people employed on Indian railways, 95.66 per cent. are native. Only the higher posts are held by Europeans, and in China these proportions would probably be even more in favour of the native element, although Europeans are required to inspire confidence, to organise an administration, and to train the natives.

The magnificent coal and iron supply of China gives her a great advantage in the matter of railways over India, whose supply is immensely inferior both in quality and extent.

Low rates will be a necessity in China. A man can travel 400 miles in India within twenty-four hours for the sum of 8*s.* 4*d.* The policy of low charges has answered well, the people on its adoption beginning to travel and send their produce by rail. The rates are now considered to be "sufficiently low to promote trade," but further efforts to draw more traffic by still lower prices would doubtless prove effectual. Animal or cart carriage in India is on an average about twelve times that by railway. For example, if grain has to travel 600 miles by railway and, to reach its destination, 50 miles by road, freight charges would be doubled. Or, supposing a 1200 miles railway radius to limit the horizon of a particular commodity from a sea-port, the radius without railways would be 100 miles. Carriage by cart in Burma is much more costly than

in even India—from 24 to 192 times the railway charge, according to locality and season, while in western China for heavy goods such as salt and pressed cotton it is, on an average, one shilling per ton-mile. Compare this with the halfpenny charged on Indian railways!

There would seem to be two methods of railway policy suitable to China: (1) State construction, under which a "Railway Fund" should be raised for a period of twenty or twenty-five years; and (2) The Indian guarantee system, under which free land, free surveys, a certain rate of interest *plus* a share in profits, are the chief terms.

This is not the place to discuss at great length the feasibility of this or that line. It may safely be asserted, however, that, in order to join Peking or Tientsin with the Yangtsze basin, and that again with the extreme south, no unusual difficulties will have to be overcome. The chief obstacles will be the bridging of the Yellow River and, in the case of the western line, some heavy hill work as the Yangtsze basin is neared. Between the Yangtsze basin and the West River no more serious difficulty will be encountered than the "divide," at an altitude of about 1000 feet. The work would be nothing more than what is yearly being carried out in many parts of the world. The through line would be about 1400 miles long, and convert the present journey of eighty or eighty-five days into one of two or three.

Little doubt can exist that, as Richthofen antici-

pated years ago, China will eventually be connected direct, *viâ* Hami, and Lanchau and Sian, with Europe by rail. "No direct connection of this kind is possible south of the Wei basin," he says, "and any road to the north of it would have to keep entirely north of the Yellow River, and run altogether through desert countries." The same reasons which confined the commerce of China with the West, during thousands of years, to the natural route (*viâ* Hami) will be decisive as regards railway communications. For natural facilities, and the supply, at both ends of the line, of populous, productive, and large commercial regions, it is the only line. The whole road is well provided with coal. Kansu rivals Shansi in the richness and extent of its coal-fields. No department of the province, north of the Tsungling Mountains, appears to be deficient in coal, and in some parts a superabundance of it is said to exist. The coal formation extends, with few interruptions, from eastern Shansi to Ili, through thirty degrees of longitude, and is also found near Ili and Yarkhand. There is scarcely an instance on record, remarks Richthofen, "where so many favourable and essential conditions co-operate to concentrate all future intercourse, on so long a line, upon one single and definite channel."

As regards railways within the Empire, the construction of the Peking-Hankau line is arranged for with a so-called Belgian syndicate, and, if properly executed, should be a good line; but

the best railway under contemplation in China would be one from Peking, *viâ* Tientsin and Chinkiang, to Hangchau,* with an extension later to Canton. The line would pass some forty towns with an average population of 25,000 each, and a large number of villages. The length of the Grand Canal from Tientsin to Hangchau is 650 miles. No better line exists in the world, from the point of view of population, resources, and cheapness of construction. It follows the most important of the actual routes of commerce in the Empire, passes the greatest possible number of cities, towns, and villages, and connects great ports with rich coal regions of established value. Coal and iron of great value are found in large areas of Shantung, Chihli, and Shansi, as shown elsewhere, and the coal-mines at Kaiping, in northern Chihli, have a yearly increasing output and are a decided

* Subjoined is a Table showing the Provinces, chief cities with their minimum populations, and the usual estimate of the population of provinces which would be traversed by this line:

Provinces.	Name of Chief Cities.	Minimum Population of Chief Cities.	Usual estimate of Population of Provinces.
Chihli	Peking	800,000	37,000,000
	Tientsin	400,000	
Shantung	Chinan	200,000	29,000,000
Anhwei	Wuhu	90,000	36,000,000
Kiangsu	Yangchau	300,000	39,000,000
	Chinkiang	100,000	
	Nanking	200,000	
	Suchau	400,000	
Chekiang	Ningpo	255,000	8,000,000
	Hangchau	400,000	

success. It is probable that northern China will prove, if not first in rank, at least not second to any other coal-producing country in the world.

A few words regarding the chief cities passed on the proposed line may not be out of place. Tientsin, the great *entrepôt* of northern China, is situated at the junction of the Grand Canal with the Pei ho, and is 80 miles from Peking. Its trade is increasing by leaps and bounds. But there are two great obstructions to its sea-borne traffic: (1) The shallow bar and exposure to sea-winds, which confine the trade to small craft and sometimes cause enormous delays, and danger even, in landing mails. (2) The three months' closure in winter, which offers an incalculable check to the flow of merchandise. Chinkiang is 150 miles from the mouth of the Yangtsze, at the junction of that river and the Grand Canal. It is a most valuable central position for trade, only requiring communications north and south. Yangchau also occupies an important situation for commerce, and has nearly the same population as Hangchau, the capital of the Chekiang province, also a great centre of trade. Suchau is more populous than Hangchau, and a greater commercial city. Before the Taiping rebellion it was the finest in China, and is now rapidly recovering its place as a great manufacturing and trading centre. The grain which formerly was transported to Peking by canal, now mostly goes by the "China Merchants Company" steamers, the carriage at fancy prices enabling the company to compete with British steamers.

The Imperial telegraphs are being rapidly extended throughout the Empire. There are lines between Peking and Tientsin, and connecting the capital with the principal places in Manchuria to the Russian frontier on the Amur and the Usuri; while Niuchwang, Chifu, Shanghai, Yangchau, Suchau, the seven treaty ports on the Yangtsze, Canton, Wuchau, Lungchau, and in fact most of the principal cities in the Empire, are now connected with one another and with the capital. The line from Canton westward passes *viâ* Yunnan fu to Manwyne, on the borders of Burma. Shanghai is in communication with Fuchau, Amoy, Kashing, Shaoshing, Ningpo, and other places. Lines have been constructed from Fuchau and Canton, and between Taku, Port Arthur, and Seul; and the line along the Yangtsze valley has been extended to Chungking. By an arrangement made with the Russian telegraph authorities, the Chinese and Siberian lines in the Amur valley were joined in the latter part of 1892, and there is overland communication between Peking and Europe through Russian territory.

Banking in China is carried on by private bankers, chiefly by Shansi men, established in most large cities and towns. The system is fairly complete. The banks issue circular letters of credit, and remittance by drafts is fully arranged for, even to the remotest districts of the Empire.

The postal service of China, a primitive business from the Western standpoint, is carried on

by means of post-carts and runners. There are, besides, numerous private postal couriers, and during the winter, when the approach to the capital is closed by sea and river, a service between the office of the Foreign Customs at Peking and the outports is maintained.

The Chinese have always been great believers in their own postal system, as in everything else Chinese. Even those who have emigrated to British colonies adhere to their own system, refusing to use the duly constituted Government post, except under compulsion. Both Hongkong and the Straits Settlements have been actually compelled to legislate in the matter. It is, indeed, remarkable how safe the native post is, not merely for the carriage of ordinary letters, but for the conveyance of money.

The Imperial Chinese Post Office was opened on February 2, 1897, under the management of Sir Robert Hart, and China has since joined the Postal Union.

CHAPTER V

ENGLAND'S OBJECTIVE IN CHINA

THERE are two ways of attacking the trade of China, so far as England is concerned. The one is from the seaboard, entering China by the main rivers, notably the Yangtsze, the main artery of China, and the West River, which passes through the southern provinces. The other is from England's land base—Burma—through Yunnan. Doubtless the sea approach, hitherto the only one, is from the purely trading point of view incomparably the more important; but the other, the land route, is complementary, and is a necessity if our commercial and political influence is to be maintained and extended. The isolation of China over-sea has long since been annulled by steam, and her former complete isolation by land has now also ceased. Hitherto cut off from all approach by land, she will in the north shortly be placed in direct railway communication with Europe, and this fact by itself renders imperative our advance from the south.

It is now many years since I first advocated the railway connection of Burma and south-western China, first of all with a view to opening Yunnan and

Szechuan, and, secondly, to effect a junction between those two great waterways, the Yangtsze and the Irrawaddy. It appeared to me that the connection of the navigation limit of the Yangtsze with our most eastern Indian province was a matter of cardinal importance, not merely because it was evidently desirable, for the purposes of commerce, to connect the central and lower regions of the Yangtsze with Burma, but also for political reasons. And it so happens that the navigation limit of that river lies within the province of Szechuan, which, for various reasons, must be the commercial and political objective of England. Recent events have emphasised the soundness of that view, and should induce us to deal, without delay, with the question of land communication between Burma and the Upper Yangtsze, for it is there that must be decided the question of the supremacy of central China.

Burma is our land-gate to China. The barrier which blocked our approach from the Indian littoral was broken down by the annexation of Upper Burma. On our north-eastern frontier we are conterminous with China, a country offering us great markets which afford hope of incalculable extension, and, through interconnection, promising sources of future strength to both countries. On our north-western frontier the railways are almost entirely strategic and political, hardly in any sense intended to attain a commercial object; they are defensive, and lead to barren regions. On the north-east, railways must be politico-commercial.

Elsewhere * the general position of France towards China, and the inconvenience, difficulties, and dangers arising from French aims and aspirations in that quarter, especially through her connection with Russia, have been indicated. France, though not a great Asiatic Power, is yet possessed of one-third of Indo-China, and is determined, at all hazards, not so much to secure the trade of southern China as under the guise of commerce to establish there her political influence, which she intends to effect by means of railways connecting the southern provinces with the French possessions. The result of such action upon our prospective trade with these regions, and upon our political influence in China, has been apparent for many years past. Unless we anticipated the French, or at any rate took steps similar to theirs, protective tariffs everywhere, with the avowed intention of excluding British trade in order to benefit that of France, were sure to be the inevitable result.

In the entire field of Chinese trade the region of southern and south-western China holds an important position. Less rich, less populated, as a whole, than central China and the Great Plain stretching from the Lower Yangtsze to Peking, still two provinces (Szechuan and Kwangtung) stand in the front rank, and in mineral wealth, at least, two other provinces (Yunnan and Kweichau) are unsurpassed. So far, little of this territory is reached by European manufactures, owing to the enormous cost of inland carriage, which prevents machine-

* See "Political Question," chapters xiii. and xiv.

made goods from entering into competition with hand-made native manufactures. Politically, too, this region is of the very highest importance.

Yunnan and western Kweichau constitute an elevated broken plateau with an average height of about five thousand feet, having no communication by water with the plains lying to the north, south, and east. This plateau falls abruptly to the valleys of the Yangtsze on the north, and of the Irrawaddy, Mekong, and Red River on the west and south, with an easier gradient to the basin of the West River and the plains of Kwangsi and Hunan, lying to the south and east. Extending for some six hundred miles from Indo-China to the Yangtsze, the plateau has many fine valleys, but no level surface except an occasional lake basin.

Yunnan is bordered on the west by Burma and the Shan States; on the south by the Shan States and Tongking; on the east by the provinces of Kwangsi and Kweichau; and on the north by Szechuan. In the west and south-west its rivers and streams flow through deep, broad fissures that are always dangerous and frequently impassable. Several important rivers traverse Yunnan from north to south, the chief ones being the Salween and Mekong, emptying respectively into the Bay of Bengal and the China Sea; on the west are two small waterways, the Taping and Shweli, tributaries of the Irrawaddy; in the south and south-east are the Songkoi and West Rivers. The upper reaches of the Yangtsze divide Yunnan from Szechuan.

Of the waterways of Yunnan, the Yangtsze is, or could be made, navigable to the northern borders of the province, and in the south the Songkoi and West River are navigable for light-draught vessels, the first to the borders of Yunnan, and the latter for over half its length. From the west, in Upper Burma, communication has been maintained by what is commonly known as the Bhamo (caravan) route and through the Shan States.

The Bhamo route was for years in great favour with the Government of India, and the proposal to make it a main trade road between Burma and China consequently obtained considerable support throughout England. Expedition after expedition was sent from Burma into Yunnan by this way, but with no favourable result, for the physical difficulties are practically insurmountable. Notwithstanding the unfavourable accounts of this route, given from time to time by various travellers, it was tenaciously adhered to by the Indian authorities, who evinced a singular inacquaintance with the geography of the region, a fact which doubtless influenced them in neglecting the opportunities which were ours of carrying a railway through Siam to southern China,* which would both have opened the kingdom of Siam and given us the only natural approach from Burma to Yunnan and the Yangtsze. Political difficulties arose in later years as regards Siam, but these could

* Proposed by myself and Mr. Hallett in 1882; the Assam-Burma connection, now in process of construction, having been suggested by us in 1881.

and should have been obviated by timely action. Siam, then, being out of the question, and the Bhamo route having at last been abandoned, though very reluctantly, there remained no course open but to seek a new trace for a railway, and one which would pass entirely through British territory, for this had now become a necessity owing to the neighbourhood of the French in Siam and in the Shan States.

Such a railway is now being made between Mandalay, the former capital of Upper Burma, and the Kunlon Ferry, on the Salween River, a distance of some two hundred and fifty miles, the terminus being situated close to the south-west corner of Yunnan, whence it is proposed to carry the line to Tali fu, a town of importance in the west of the province. Unfortunately for the chances of success of any such railway from Upper Burma, the mountain barriers running north and south, between the great rivers, present obstacles of a very serious character. This railway, though costly, will be useful, and will serve a section of the Shan States and also the valley system running northwards to Tali fu. The country east of that city is served from the capital, Yunnan fu, which at present is supplied from Canton *viâ* the West River and a long overland haul, and from Shanghai *viâ* the Yangtsze and a tedious land journey.

The province of Yunnan has been described in widely differing terms by various travellers and writers, either as a rich province with immense

potentialities, the population of which had been reduced to several millions by the Mohammedan rebellion (which began in 1856 and ended in 1873) and by the ensuing plague and pestilence; or as a wretchedly poor country, almost uninhabited and containing nothing of promise for the future. As the writer belongs to the former category and is a firm believer in the potentialities of Yunnan, it is, perhaps, as well that he should quote an authority who has an intimate acquaintance with the question and is an observer of sound judgment. Speaking of Yunnan having been described as a "rich province," Mr. Hosie remarks:

"I have no hesitation in saying that it is, but it contains a poor population, and, until the condition of the latter is improved, no great development of trade need be looked for in that direction. It is estimated to contain a population of from five to six millions, the great mass of which is engaged in agricultural pursuits. True, there are copper mines in the north and east, and tin and lead mines in the south of the province; but mining industries are so hampered by official interference as to profit little the owners or the workmen. Agriculture, too, is carried on under a system of small farms, and the absence of good roads and the impossibility of greatly improving those that exist, owing to the mountainous character of the province, do not tend to the enrichment of the peasantry. Nor is this all; immense tracts in the north and west of the province have lain waste since the Mohammedan rebellion, and owing to the antipathy of the Chinese to settle on lands which they look upon as the property of people who may still be living, or whose descendants may still be living, it must be many years before the agriculture of the province is properly developed."

With the destruction of the old industries of the province—mining, silk rearing and manufacture—

came an increased demand for opium in Szechuan and the eastern provinces, which led to poppy cultivation becoming the great industry of Yunnan. Foreign imports are paid for in opium both in Yunnan and Kweichau. Owing to the water communication by the Yangtsze, a heavier class of goods is sent to Szechuan than to Yunnan, where pack animals and porters are exclusively employed, thus rendering the question of weight a matter for serious consideration. Prices are rather higher at Yunnan fu, even for goods of lighter texture and inferior quality, than in Szechuan. Foreign goods from Hongkong come by way of the West River or of Pakhoi to Nanning, thence by boat to Pose and Pongai ,and then by caravan through Kwangnan; or by one of the French routes through Tongking.

Puerh was for three years in the possession of the Mohammedan rebels, and has never recovered its former prosperity; and at present, although containing a thoroughly Chinese population, the town does not seem to have much trade. Szumao is a thriving place, although it will not compare, either in trade or appearance, with the third-class cities of Szechuan. Yunnan fu stands on a lake at the bottom of an extensive depression. At one time there was no outlet from this basin, and only in the thirteenth century was the canal cut which now carries the water from the south-west side of the lake into a stream flowing north to the Yangtsze. Yunnan fu is at the centre of three converging

routes, and occupies a position admirable for administrative purposes. With proper communications it would become a most important city. The climate of Yunnan is bad in the valleys, but fairly good in the open plains, the north being probably as suited to Europeans as any part of south-west China.

The wealth of Upper Burma, and also the resources of western China and the Shan States, are incalculable, but they lie fallow at present for want of connections, both internal and with the outer world. Without facilitating our communications we need expect no great expansion of our commerce in western China, Burma, or any part of Indo-China. The laying down of a comprehensive system of railways, and of lateral feeder roads and light railways, to open up these regions would involve a considerable outlay for some years to come, but the money thus invested would be richly repaid. One of the most remarkable facts about Lower Burma is the rapidity with which the population has grown. Burma and its Shan States provide an admirable absorbing ground for the ever-increasing and dense populations of India and China. There is ample room for an increase of scores of milllions to the present population of Burma.

The statement of the resources of Yunnan given by Hosie seems to me fair, but it is reasonable to maintain that a province which before the Mohammedan rebellion supported something like 16,000,000, chiefly by mining, and now maintains

about 6,000,000, mainly on agriculture, gives promise of developing a lucrative trade and regaining its former prosperity, and even more, provided only that communications are improved. The wealth is in the minerals; and this being the case, it is only by communications that the condition of the people can be greatly altered for the better, and that the security and order necessary, especially for mining operations, can be brought about.*

However this may be, the view that Yunnan is "worthless" is untenable. It is not those, it may be noted, who have had a varied experience of the province, or who have studied its conditions and resources, such as Rocher, Bourne, and Hosie, but rather cyclist commissioners and others who have merely crossed the north-western section of Yunnan from Bhamo to the Yangtsze—the very avenue the impracticability of which the writer spent years in demonstrating—who are responsible for this opinion, which it is hardly necessary to take seriously. I have always been of the opinion that the configuration of Yunnan is such that no single avenue can tap the whole trade of the province. To propose one route for the whole country is like advocating some quack medicine for a patient who lies ill with half-a-dozen ailments. It seemed to me in former days, as it does now, that the Yangtsze water route could only deal with the northern part

* In the Kuo chiu tin mines alone, according to Bourne, before the rebellion there were employed no less than 100,000 men, while to-day there are not more than 20,000.

of the province, for the physical features precluded the possibility of trade penetrating, without railways, into the heart of Yunnan. In referring to Hosie's appreciation of the province, I frankly own that my opinion of the whole question has been modified by the fact that the northern part is more valuable than was understood, for it appears that this region is exceedingly rich in copper, and contains some of the most fertile plains in western China.

Yunnan, then, will be served from three different quarters—from Burma on the south-west, Tongking and Hongkong on the south-east, and the Upper Yangtsze in the north. I can see nothing, however, to operate against the advisability of effecting the railway communication so long urged by me, which would benefit the Yangtsze basin and Shanghai, the West River and Hongkong, as well as Burma and Rangoon. It is not a case of rival but of complementary routes, which would be of great mutual advantage. And if this be true of Yunnan, none the less is it so of Szechuan.

Turning now to the province of Kweichau, we find that, though a secluded region, and less developed than even Yunnan, it has the advantage of the latter in the matter of water communications, owing to its position as regards the Yangtsze River. Excepting the Yuan River, the waterways serving the province pass through Szechuan, which lies astride the Yangtsze. The Yuan, from the eastern part of the province, runs east and north-

east to the Tungting Lake, which overflows into the Yangtsze a little more than a hundred miles above Hankau; notwithstanding the rapids obstructing its course, the Yuan is navigable to a point about a hundred miles from Kweiyang, the capital of Kweichau. This river, therefore, serves the eastern section of Kweichau, the remaining portions being intimately connected with Szechuan.

The home of the Miaotzu, a non-Chinese race, Kweichau has often been the theatre of internecine struggles between the aboriginal tribes and the Chinese. The mountainous character of the country lent itself to the guerilla warfare waged between the natives of the soil and the newcomers. The Miaotzu were driven step by step to the southern section of the province, leaving traces behind of the ruin and desolation brought about by civil war—too common a sight in many parts of China. The struggle here, as in Yunnan and in Kansu, was waged after the usual Chinese fashion, diplomacy and the silver key playing a much larger part in the conquest of Kweichau than the prowess of arms. The Chinese population, especially of the northern half, consists of emigrants from the neighbouring provinces, and these not of the highest class, for Kweichau, notwithstanding its immense mineral wealth in coal and iron, copper and quicksilver, and its great natural beauties — it has been well termed the "Switzerland of China"—cannot, in view of its complete isolation, be pronounced an attractive country for emigrants.

It is unnecessary to recapitulate here the characteristics, treated more fully elsewhere,* of the people of Yunnan and Kweichau, especially the Mohammedans of Yunnan and the Shans of Kweichau. The main fact to be noted is that, if England means seriously to substantiate her claim to the Yangtsze basin, she should make it her aim to encourage good relations with these people and with the aborigines of Szechuan and the Mohammedans of Kansu, who are bound to play an important part, and who constitute a factor of the first value. And even the non-aboriginal and non-Mohammedan Chinese inhabitants of these provinces are very different from their kinsmen of the plains, as regards both physique and courage.

Before leaving the south-western provinces of Yunnan and Kweichau, it may be pointed out that, although they are at present so poor that the taxes do not yield enough for the expense of government—Kweichau actually requiring an aid of 750,000 taels—yet mining will completely alter this state of affairs, and will eventually make these provinces very prosperous.

Let us now turn to the Yangtsze, and see what this great artery of China—on which Szechuan is largely dependent for its prosperity—is like from its cradle in Tibet to its mouth in the Yellow Sea, where it forms for the Western maritime Powers "the gate to China."

The Yangtsze, usually called the Ta kiang, or

* See "The Geographical Question," chapter i.

Great River, takes its rise in the high central plateau of Tibet. It extends from 88° E. to 122° E., covering in its winding course a distance of some 3000 miles, of which about 2000 are navigable. The main stream is formed by three branches having their confluence at longitude 94° E. and latitude 34° 50′ N., where its breadth in the dry weather is 750 feet, and in the summer rains over a mile. Its level here is about 13,000 feet above the sea, and at this point it is separated from the Hoang ho only by the Bayan Kara mountains, the melting snows of which feed both rivers. Curving first in an easterly direction, it then proceeds southwards through tremendous gorges past the town of Batang. Twisting again to the east, it passes the town of Likiang, whence it makes a half-circle and is joined by the Lalung. After this, making yet another curve, it proceeds through still more stupendous ravines north-eastwards to Sui fu. Here it is joined by its large affluent the Min, considered by the Chinese the main river. The Yangtsze—the Kinsha kiang, or "River of Golden Sand," as it is here called—is only navigable to Pingshan, about forty miles above Sui fu, while the Min River can be ascended as far as Chengtu, the capital of Szechuan.

The mountainous districts in Szechuan, enclosed southwards by the great bend of the upper Yangtsze, belong ethnically to Tibet, although politically separated from that region; the majority of the people are of the same stock, and have similar customs and social

institutions. In western Szechuan* and Yunnan the rivers are crossed by means of iron suspension bridges, or in movable seats slung from bank to bank on bamboo ropes. The contrast between the Tibetan and Chinese villages is striking, the latter being generally grouped in compact masses, and the former scattered over a wide area, so that all the enclosed towns are Chinese, and the straggling suburbs Tibetan. The lamasaries, however, where large numbers of the priests live together in a single community, are inhabited almost exclusively by Tibetans.

This magnificent province of Szechuan, from its size, population, trade and productions, may, according to Mrs. Bishop, truly be called the empire province, and gives one some idea of the possibilities for trade which exist in western China, and some perception of the capacities, resourcefulness, and enterprise of the Chinese themselves.

"In the mountains," she says, "there are innumerable horse-shoe corries with narrow entrances, terraced and exquisitely cultivated, each with its large and handsome farmhouse and its cedar and cypress groves; and mandarins' country houses, rivalling

* According to Baber, the Chien-chang Valley, otherwise the Prefecture of Ning-yuan, is perhaps the least known part of the eighteen provinces. "Two or three sentences in the book of Ser Marco, to the effect that after crossing high mountains he reached a fertile country containing many towns and villages and inhabited by a very immoral population, constitute to this day the only description we possess of *Cain-du*, as he calls the district. The fact of its being unexplored is sufficient, without the other inducements held out by the generally sedate Venetian, to make it 'a very pleasant country for young fellows to go to.'"

some of our renowned homes in size and stateliness, are frequent. As the country grows more open there are fortified refuges on rocky heights, great temples with porcelain fronts in rich colouring, distilleries, paper and flour mills, and every town and large village has its special industry;—silk-weaving, straw-plaiting, hat-making, dressing hides, iron or brass work, pottery and china, chair-making, dyeing, carving and gilding idols, making the red paper used for religious and festive purposes, and the imitation gold and silver coins burned as offerings, etc.—everything indicates industry and prosperity and a certain security for the gains of labour. There is no winter."

Many of the stone and iron suspension bridges existing in Szechuan and Yunnan were wonderful works at the time they were constructed, and even now some of them might be regarded as creditable structures. To illustrate how little is known of China, I have repeatedly been asked whether it was physically possible to make such a railway across Yunnan as I had proposed; and this though many travellers had described the iron suspension bridges spanning the greatest rivers of western China!*

Chengtu with its population approaching a million is justly celebrated throughout China. Everything indicates its wealth and political importance. The Chengtu plain is thus described by Mrs. Bishop:

"This glorious plain, with its four million inhabitants, its prosperous cities and villages, its innumerable 'palatial' farmhouses among cedars, bamboo, and fruit trees, its fine bridges with roofs decorated in lacquer and gold; its stately temples, its enormous

* Illustrations of such bridges across the Mekong, Salween, and other rivers, reproduced from photographs, may be found in my "Across Chrysê," published in 1882.

wheelbarrow traffic, its water and oil mills, its boundless fertility and wealth, and its immunity for two thousand years from drought and floods, are the monument of the engineering genius of one man, whose temple on a wooded height above the gorge of the Couching Dragon, on the Min, is the most magnificent in China, bearing his motto incised in stone and lettered in gold in every conspicuous place, '*Dig the bed deep, keep the banks low.*'" *

The whole valley of the Min is a most prosperous region, the land on either side of the river being highly cultivated by means of irrigation canals. Below the junction of the Min the Yangtsze flows north-east, a distance of some two hundred miles, to Chungking. Situated at the mouth of the Kialing, which enters the Yangtsze from the north, Chungking is the great commercial city of Szechuan and the second trade emporium of inland China.† The province of Szechuan, rich as it is, has the disadvantage of being difficult of access from the rest of the world, for merchandise can now only reach it during certain months of the year and after a difficult voyage. Its trade would be increased very greatly were the navigation of the river rendered better and safer, thus facilitating the establish-

* "R. G. Proceedings," 1897.

† Under Article VI. of the Shimonoseki Treaty, four ports were opened to foreign commerce—viz., Chungking, in the province of Szechuan; Shashi, in Hupei; Suchau, in Kiangsu; and Hangchau, in Chekiang. Chungking was already open in a fashion. British subjects were allowed to establish themselves there, and to import and export merchandise at the same tariff of duties as other ports; but the right of British vessels to visit the port was not conceded, the carrying trade being restricted to native junks. Steam navigation was secured by the Japanese as far as Chungking, and under the most favoured nation clause the right accrued to us.

ment of effective steam communication not only to Chungking but as far as Sui fu.

The popular view of the wealth of Szechuan is well illustrated by the Chinese proverb: "You'll never see an ill-dressed man in Szechuan." In the popular mind Szechuan means plenty. Apart from its great mineral resources, it produces silk, wax, tobacco, all of good quality; grass-cloth, grain in abundance, and tea, plentiful but coarse in quality. The climate is changeable, necessitating a variety of clothing. Cotton is grown in Szechuan, but Bourne states that Indian yarn is driving it out of cultivation, not apparently on account of the enormous saving through spinning by machinery, but because it can be grown more cheaply in India. The greater part of the surplus wealth of Szechuan is devoted to the purchase of raw native and foreign cottons and woollen goods. All the cotton is not consumed in the province, for the Szechuanese manufacture from the imported raw material and export it to Yunnan and western Kweichau.

Where the division between the western hilly region and the eastern plain country occurs (at the 110th meridian) we come to the treaty port Ichang. Here a close succession of precipitous mountains, through which the Yangtsze breaks in a series of wild gorges and rapids, extends from the town of Kweichau, in Szechuan, to Ichang. There are no roads fit for heavy traffic in these mountains, and the only merchandise carried across them is opium from Fuchau, in Szechuan, to Shashi,

a port eighty miles below Ichang. Difficult as is the navigation of this part of the Yangtsze, it is the main artery, indeed the only trade channel, with the exception of mountain routes such as the one just mentioned, between the east and west of China. The number of junks engaged in this through traffic has been roughly estimated at about 7000 annually. All these are large craft, carrying from 75 to 150 tons of cargo. The crews are paid by the trip, as elsewhere in China, those of the up-river junks being double and treble in number of those bound down stream. No wages are paid for the down trip, and thus there is no lack of porters to carry the opium which is exported eastward across the mountains. If sent down by the river it would have to pay a heavy duty at both the Kweichau and Ichang barriers; and it is to avoid these imposts, and from the fear of losing so precious a cargo through shipwreck on the rapids, that the large opium traffic passes across the hills instead of along the natural trade route, the river. The strongest and most active of the junkmen proceeding to Szechuan carry baskets ready to be put into use for this opium carriage when they leave their boat. It is in these baskets, peculiarly shaped utensils, strapped on the back, Alpine fashion, that the opium is packed to a weight of 1000 ounces. Large bands of these men may be seen trudging like beasts of burden, along the difficult mountain paths to Shashi, each man receiving a mere pittance of wages for his long and weary journey.

Ichang, the present limit of the steamer navigation, is about 1000 miles from the sea, and is chiefly important as a place of transhipment of goods for Szechuan, its import trade consisting principally of cotton goods, and its exports of silk, white wax, and medicines. The next town of importance, eighty-five miles below Ichang, is Shashi, which Bourne calls "the Manchester of western China." The native cotton-cloth which supplies the western province is graded, packed, and shipped away at Shashi, the neighbouring country being the greatest centre of weaving in China. At every village of Szechuan and Yunnan the Blackburn mission found Shashi cloth. Goods and produce for Szechuan are brought to Ichang from all parts of China for transhipment into Szechuan junks. The greater part comes from Hankau, a long and tedious journey of thirty to forty days by river.

The difficulties attendant upon the introduction of steamers to Ichang, and the results achieved, furnish a particularly useful lesson. Shortly after Ichang was opened, a steamer was put on the river between that port and Hankau. It was anticipated with confidence that the Szechuan traders would avail themselves of the expeditious transit thus afforded them, but although it was made evident that goods, which formerly took forty days to reach Ichang when conveyed in junks, could be brought by steamer in five days, the Chinese merchants engaged in the Szechuan trade held back. Vested interests induced some traders to oppose,

but the great majority were restrained by other reasons. They were uncertain whether the steamer would be able to run regularly in winter, when the river is low, and they feared the risk, should the vessel stop running, of having their cargo shut out from transport by the irritated junk-owners. A "junk ring" was formed, not only of the owners but of the up-river carriers, and threats were made against traders shipping by steamer on the lower reaches of the river. The first vessel, unfortunately, was a failure, being unable to run during the winter, and was withdrawn. A second attempt made by the China Merchants Company proved more successful. The steamer obtained support, and the junk ring gradually lost strength.

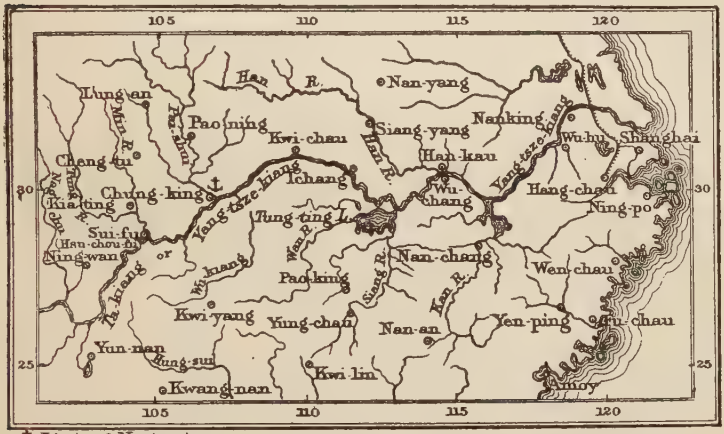
Not till 1897, however, was the company able to keep open communications throughout the winter by means of a light-draught stern-wheel boat. This changed the whole complexion of affairs. The Chinese, who had been waiting to see how the system would work practically, began to patronise the steamer largely. Still the steam service is far from what it should be. In parts of December, January, February, and March, when the river level is lowest, the vessel is often unable to run with regularity. It is hardly necessary to remark that such checks to the navigation are most damaging to the steady development of trade on the Upper Yangtsze. A most persistent attempt to open the Yangtsze to Chungking by means of a specially constructed steamer has been

made by Mr. Little through a series of years, and has resulted in final success, and a debt of gratitude is due to the plucky pioneer. Whenever and wherever the advantages of steam traffic, properly applied, are made apparent to the Chinese, they will never return to the junk.

We now come to the lower course of the Yangtsze, which is lined on both sides, but especially on its right bank, by numerous marshes and shallow lakes or reservoirs, which are dry except during inundations, when they receive the overflow of the river and its subsidiary drainage. The Tungting, the largest of these lakes, lies to the south of the Yangtsze, just above its junction with the Han River, and between the lake and the river an immense trade passes. At this point the Yangtsze is joined by its tributary the Siang, the main artery of trade in Hunan, where are situated the important cities of Yochau, now opened to trade, Siangyin, Changsha, Siangtan, and Hengchau. Bourne considers this district one of the most promising for the development of British trade, and it is probable that, when the minerals are properly exploited, it will prove to be one of the richest regions in China.

Below the Tungting Lake the Yangtsze receives its affluent the Han, flowing from the Tsinling range, through Shensi and Hupei, to the left bank of the Yangtsze at Hankau. In summer, but in summer alone, the Han might be made navigable for light-draught steamers a distance of some three hundred miles, throughout the portion which

is embanked. By means of its tributaries goods are distributed over an enormous area in Hupei, Shensi, Honan, and are actually delivered, *viâ* the Han, aided by a five days' carriage over a mountainous route, at Sian fu, the capital of Shensi, a distance of some seven hundred miles. On one of the affluents of the Han is situated an *entrepôt* for



THE NAVIGATION-LIMITS OF THE YANGTSZE AND ITS TRIBUTARIES.

the transport of all merchandise between the north-western provinces on the one hand and the central and south-western on the other. Thence there exists a continuous water communication north-west and south-west to remote regions of the Empire. North and north-west of the radius of the Han River system there is no water communication, while to the north-east this is only found after a long distance is traversed.

At the confluence of the Han with the Yangtsze

lies the treaty port of Hankau, with an enormous population; and the city of Hanyang, where are the cotton mills and iron works established by Chang Chih Tung in 1892. On the southern bank of the Yangtsze is Wuchang, the populous provincial capital. The valley of the Han is a central region, where all advantages are united for the prosperity and increase of the population. There are to be found a healthy, temperate climate, a fertile soil, an abundant water supply of excellent quality, varied flora, marble and building stone, as well as coal. The importance of Hankau as a central junction for trade communications and for the future railway system of western China has been pointed out.*

Below Hankau is the Poyang Lake, famous for its fine scenery, and near the confluence of the Yangtsze and a river draining the lake is situated the treaty port of Kiukiang, an important trade centre. The Poyang resembles the Tungting Lake in its main features, namely, its vast dimensions and its importance as a terminus for trade. It receives, by means of the Fu, Kan, and other lesser streams, the drainage of the whole Kiangsi province. Inundations on the Yangtsze raise the surface of the lake at times as much as thirty feet. Populous towns are numerous on the wooded hill-sides, as well as on the islands and peninsulas; and fleets of junks, like floating towns, are anchored near the ports. What has been said regarding the Tungting Lake

* See chapter iv.

and Hunan, as regards the possible development of trade by steam, may be applied to the Poyang and Kiangsi. There is an enormous trade to be developed by the Han Valley, north of the Yangtsze, and through the Tungting and Poyang Lakes and their affluents, which radiate in a southerly direction. These lakes and waterways present difficulties, but steam navigation is practicable, and with proper facilities, and strongly supported by our Government, British enterprise could accomplish much. Where the steamer cannot be applied with advantage, the railway can. Railways traversing the valleys of the Kan and Fu, the Siang and Yuan Rivers, would open the provinces of Kiangsi and Hunan effectively. These and other lines would act as "feeders" to the mighty Yangtsze, and develop a most important and remunerative stream of commerce, which would centre chiefly at Hankau and Shanghai. Carried across the low "divide" between the Yangtsze and West Rivers, railways will some day be extended to Canton, and be the means of developing an enormous interprovincial traffic.

Below the Poyang, in its course through the populous province of Anhwei, a distance of some two hundred miles, the Yangtsze passes a succession of towns, many of them of importance, the treaty port for this region being Wuhu. It promises to develop into a great rice-exporting centre, though liable to suffer seriously from inundations. At Nanking, the old capital of the Chinese Empire, where the

Yangtsze enters the province of Kiangsu, the delta and its low flat lands commence, soon opening out into the estuary of the Yangtsze. Chinkiang, the port of the Kiangsu province, is situated where the Grand Canal reaches the Yangtsze. It occupies an important position, and one highly favourable for extending foreign trade, but, owing to the hindrances of likin barriers and to steamers not being allowed to ply, the place has not progressed as it might, though its trade has already reached a value of nearly £5,000,000.

The next two open ports, which, though not situated on the Yangtsze, are on the Grand Canal, and intimately connected with Shanghai, are Suchau and Hangchau, the latter the capital of the Chekiang province. In the opinion of Brenan, the opening of these two cities will make very little difference to the import trade, and he considers it doubtful whether Suchau will displace Shanghai as a centre of distribution even for the neighbouring districts, though he thinks that Hangchau, owing to its position on the Tsientang River, may become the distributing city for central Chekiang. From Chinkiang to the mouth of the river are still some two hundred miles to be traversed. At the debouchure the width is sixty miles, and although the channel is in places over thirty feet deep, the navigation is much obstructed by the numerous mud and sand banks which are constantly forming. The dense fogs, which so often envelop the whole estuary and neighbouring seaboard, form, however, the greatest obstacle and the

most dreaded, causing every year the loss of many vessels.

The port of entry to the Yangtsze is Shanghai, the commercial metropolis of China and the port of foreign imports for all China north of 25° of latitude. Fifty-five per cent. of the total value of the foreign imports at all the treaty ports, and forty-eight per cent. of the exports to foreign countries, pass through the port of Shanghai. Of recent years it has become a manufacturing centre where silk and cotton are produced by machinery. The silk filatures are numerous, while the cotton mills at Shanghai and Hankau are thirteen in number, containing 417,000 spindles and 2100 looms, with a large and increasing output.*

* See "Economic Question," chapter iii. According to the Imperial Maritime Customs Returns, the exports of mill products from Shanghai and Hankau for the years 1892–1896 were:

SHANGHAI.

Goods.	1892.	1893.	1894.*	1895.	1896.
Drills pcs .	37,930	56,840	—	4,212	31,090
Sheetings ,, .	58,357	64,661	—	—	48,100
Shirtings ,, .	—	—	—	—	55,526
Yarn piculs .	1,492	23	—	14,593	12,444

HANKAU.

Goods.	1892.	1893.	1894.	1895.	1896.
Drills pcs .	—	—	5,970	4,255	1,560
Shirtings ,, .	—	—	70,288	94,698	72,980
Yarn piculs .	—	2,013	4,413	7,263	18,868

* Manufactory burned down.

The total trade of Shanghai in foreign bottoms, import and export, amounted in 1895 to £35,772,006.

Having now dealt with the provinces of Yunnan, Kweichau, and Szechuan, which form south-western China, and with the Yangtsze, the main artery of trade in the centre of the Empire, we now pass to southern China and its chief waterway, the Sikiang or West River, which forms an important channel of trade for Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Kweichau, and Yunnan. The account of that river given in "Across Chrysê"—the narrative of my exploration in 1882—conveys the impression that the river flows through a region not only unruly, but very poor, until it reaches the recently opened treaty port of Wuchau. But, as was pointed out, the ruined cities along this part of the river show signs of former prosperity and even grandeur, that passed away owing to the Taiping and Mohammedan rebellions, which decimated the population, destroyed trade or diverted it into other channels.

The important branch of the West River is the Liu stream, which is navigable for a long distance to boats drawing three feet of water. Bourne, who followed this stream through Kwangsi, states that the Liutan rapid near Hsünchau is the only difficulty in the navigation of this stream by light-draught vessels far past the town of Liu, to the heart of Kwangsi. The Hung Shui, which joins the Liu stream, as Bourne shows, is extremely difficult of navigation and little used for traffic. At Hsünchau the Liu joins the Hsün or Nan, which is the main

channel of trade, known in its lower section as the Si-kiang or West River. This river rises in Yunnan, passes Pose, the navigation-limit for boats in Kwangsi, and flows past Nanning. Just above that city it receives a tributary, the Tso River, which rises in Tongking and flows close by Lungchau,

Limits of Steam Navigation. ⚓

SKETCH MAP SHOWING NAVIGATION-LIMITS OF SIKIANG OR WEST RIVER.

having on its left bank the town of Taiping. On the main river, twenty miles below Hsünchau, is situated Chiangkau, an important distributing centre. In this part of the West River is found a striking example of the circuitous routes to which trade may be driven by taxation. At two towns, a short distance above Wuchau, are likin stations, which has led to the country there being supplied with

foreign goods from Pakhoi, while Tang, the next town below, is supplied from Wuchau, a prosperous place situated at the junction of the Fu and West Rivers. Light-draught steamers ply to Wuchau from Canton and Hongkong, more than one-third the distance to Pose. Close to Canton, at the mouth of the North River, is Samshui, a new treaty port.

The Sikiang once opened effectively, the Southern provinces would rapidly recover their former flourishing condition. As regards the question of navigation, much remains to be done in opening the river thoroughly. And while there is no possibility of making it navigable to the borders of Yunnan, it is certain that Nanning, a commercial centre of great importance, can be opened to steam navigation. By merely clearing slightly the channel at the rapids, making better tow-paths in certain parts, and providing these where they do not exist, much might be done on the upper reaches of the river. The road from Yunnan fu, the capital, to Pose, might be greatly shortened, and, with a properly organised service of river patrol, such as exists on the Yangtsze, rendering life and property secure, an important trade might be developed.

The chief routes along which trade travels in southern China are: (1) the West River, (2) the Pakhoi-Nanning-Pose route, (3) the French routes, from Tongking northwards to Lungchau-Nanning, and on the west *viâ* the Red River to Laokai and Mengtse.

The natural channel of trade between Hongkong and south-western China is the West River. Owing, however, to the obstacles raised by taxation and the non-enforcement of the transit-pass, trade was diverted to other channels, such as the Pakhoi-Nanning route, and later to the Tongking route, the French having insisted on the effective carrying out of the transit-pass system, *viâ* Mengtse. At present British goods are actually sent from Hongkong through French territory, *viâ* Mengtse, to within seven days of Bhamo in Burma. The Lungchau route, whatever its merits might have been had the railway line from Pakhoi to Nanning* not been secured by the French Government, is now of quite secondary importance. Should the West River not at once be effectively opened throughout its course, then the Pakhoi-Nanning-Yunnan route is bound to command the largest share of the trade of south and south-western China.

Having now passed under review the provinces of south and south-western China and the great waterways — the Yangtsze and West River — we may inquire what measures should be adopted to improve the present state of affairs, in the interests of China and of foreign trade.

The first step that suggests itself is the improvement of communications by railways and steam navigation. So far as railways are concerned, Burma should be connected with Tali and

* Proposed by the writer many years ago.

Yunnan fu, Yunnan fu with Nanning, Canton with Kaulun. This would effectively open the whole of southern China lying between Burma and the British colony of Hongkong. Yunnan fu should also be connected, to the north-east, with Sui fu, on the Upper Yangtsze, the navigation-limit of that waterway. The south should also be connected with central China by railways. Steam navigation should at once be extended to Nanning and to Sui fu, and also, wherever practicable, throughout all the inland waters.

Next in importance to the creation of proper communications is the question of taxation.* All travellers, in southern China especially, dwell incessantly on the obstacles to trade resulting from the collection of so many various taxes. The British Government should insist on their treaty rights, especially the enforcement, so successfully accomplished by the French Government, of the transit-pass system.

It is from Burma, on the one hand, and from Shanghai and Hongkong, on the other, that England must, by the aid of steam applied overland and by water, effectively occupy the Upper Yangtsze region, the key to our position in China. China has ceased to be a buffer, and England must effectively occupy the Yangtsze region and southern China, if she seriously means to hold her own.

* See "Commercial Development," chapter vi.

CHAPTER VI

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The two chief European competitors in Eastern Asia are Russia and Great Britain, the former representing land conquest, the latter sea trade. Russia has rapidly moved down from the north, Great Britain has made her way round the southern coasts and peninsulas. Russia now borders north China, and her war ports, Vladivostok, Port Arthur, and Talienwan, watch the Pacific and dominate the northern waters of the Chinese seas. Russia's commerce is as yet insignificant. Germany has been a serious trade competitor in the past, and will be still more so in the future. The United States and Japan are certain to develop their trade relations with increasing energy. Finally, France will continue her political campaign under the guise of commerce.

All the facts regarding the unsatisfactory condition of our trade with China tend to teach us one lesson —how necessary it is to open China, to push our manufactures into the country, and pay the producer direct for his produce with the cottons, broadcloths, and other manufactures which we send to China. The question is one with which our commercial

future is so closely connected that it is hard to understand why a deeper interest is not taken in it. The British manufacturer at home leaves the task entirely to his agent abroad, and he, hard-headed, practical, business man, looks only to the immediate present. At only twelve out of the eighteen ports * are there British subjects engaged in any sort of trade, and at only three or four are they interested in the import trade. The foreign firms are more and more ceasing to be merchants in the true sense of the word; and, rather than push the interior trade and risk the market in China, they prefer to settle terms before the merchandise leaves Europe; in fact, in yearly increasing numbers, to act as mere commission agents. Of the textiles imported from England and America actually as much as one-half is specially indented for under instructions from Chinese dealers.

The native has great advantages in disposing of his goods at the treaty ports. He is in touch with the up-country dealers, knows the standing of the people he is dealing with, and is able to obtain

* At present British subjects are at liberty to carry on business at eighteen ports in China. These are: Niuchwang, Tientsin, Chifu, on the northern coast; Chungking, Ichang, Hankau, Kiukiang, Wuhu, Chinkiang, and Shanghai, on the Yangtsze River; Ningpo, Wenchau, Fuchau, Amoy, Swatau, Canton, Hoihau (Kiungchau), and Pakhoi, on the coast south of the Yangtsze. To these must be now added Shashi on the Yangtsze, between Ichang and Hankau; Hangchau and Suchau, two inland cities near Shanghai; Wuchau and Samshui on the West River, and Ssumao and Lungchau in the south. It is also reported that three other ports have been opened —Yochau, on the Tungting Lake, Chungwang, on the Gulf of Pechihli, and Funing in Fukien.

information about markets which the foreigner can not; moreover, the power of combination, so strong a feature of the Chinese, enables them to control the market and to render the business of foreign competitors unprofitable. The business of the British import merchant, then, being chiefly confined to Hongkong and Shanghai, the further distribution of merchandise throughout China is almost entirely in the hands of Chinese. But the Chinese agency, however satisfactory once a trade has been established, is not a good one for breaking fresh ground and pushing trade in the interior, for the Chinese have no initiative.

Perhaps undue stress has always been laid on the obstructions offered to trade extension by the exactions of the mandarins. That is undoubtedly a serious barrier, but a still greater one—as shown nearly thirty years ago in a very able Report of the delegates of the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce * on the trade of the Upper Yangtsze—is the inertia of a people of stagnant ideas, who are not enterprising, and whose means of intercommunication are very limited.

"They will not advance towards foreigners to seek their trade until foreigners have pressed it on them. Foreigners must provide the means of bringing different parts of the Empire into close communication, they must also, to a certain extent, create the wants which they wish to supply, by offering their goods, and 'introducing' them to their customers. Commerce everywhere requires to be energetically pushed to be successful, and this is peculiarly true of the trade in foreign manufactures in China;

* "China," No. 1. 1870.

though the Chinese are themselves incapable of originating any such improvement, they are very ready to avail themselves of it when provided for them. But the spirit of enterprise is all on the side of the foreigners, and the onus of every forward movement in commerce must necessarily rest on them." *

A reputation for examining problems which do not affect the immediate present seems to carry with it in business certain disadvantages. The man who does this is set down as wanting in practical shrewdness, and in time acquires a name for being a theorist, which means ruin. It is, my business friends have always told me, a case of future and theory *versus* present and practice. The fact is, the merchant comes to China to make money, and to retire as soon as possible. His first consideration is to get orders and contracts, and he is quite indifferent as to the country of origin of the goods he handles. I once heard the whole question disposed of thus by a successful business man—need I say he was a Scotchman?—"My dear sir, I am not working for posterity."

In all matters of patience and, it must be added, also of "push," of taking trouble and enduring disagreeable experiences, the Britisher compares unfavourably with the young German. The "trivial"

* This view of the situation is fully borne out by Messrs. Brenan and Bourne, who recently investigated the question of China trade. "If the interchange of commodities," says the former, "between the East and the West is to grow, it is the Western merchant who must discover what more the Chinaman has to give us in exchange for our manufactures. The initiative must come from our side, and until we can take more from China, she must not be expected to take more from us."

business, involving great detail, is not congenial to the English merchant. It is not in his "line." But somehow, as Brenan well remarks, "there always seems to be a German in whose line it is."*

The Russians, too, like the Germans, are very painstaking, enterprising, and pushing in business, not only in Mongolia, but also in the Western provinces of China. Caravans from Moscow and Tobolsk actually find their way by the long overland route to the city of Lanchau, and it is surely a significant fact that Russia is already able to compete against England in that region. Every one who has seen anything of western China is struck by the lack of British commercial enterprise there, as in other parts of the interior of China; but in the north-west the traders of Russian Central Asia are gradually pushing their way and establishing a firmer hold upon the markets. The British trader works on a totally different system. He settles at the treaty port, declines to learn the "beastly language," and is content to entrust his goods to Chinese agencies, for disposal inland. Thus, illegal taxes are exacted during inland transit, which tend to destroy British trade. Until recently the only European agent in north-western or western China employed by a British firm to

* To show how anxious the Germans are to meet the wants of the Chinese, it may be mentioned that there are certain firms in Hamburg which collect old horseshoes all over Germany, then sort them and ship them out in bulk. When a Chinaman now gives an order for old iron, it is always set out in the beginning of the contract that they are to be Hamburg horseshoes.

look after their inland trade, is a German. There is singularly little intercourse between foreigners and natives, even in matters of business, both in China and Japan. Amongst merchants few have knowledge of the language or have acquaintances amongst the business men of good position, and all are dependent on the "comprador" of China and the "banto" of Japan. Both Bourne and Brenan emphasise the harm done by trusting implicitly to the comprador system.

There can be no doubt that competition in the north-west, as elsewhere, will, with the improvement of communication, become keener and keener, and our merchants will have to exert themselves in a very different fashion from that hitherto obtaining if they mean to hold their own. The Russian trader is always a storekeeper. He is not above serving in his own store, and does not leave that to a Chinese. The Russians, in fact, are content to carry on business in a very small way and to take small profits, such as the British trader would scorn. This lofty standpoint, indeed, seems a characteristic of the British trader, as compared with the Russian or German, probably due to the fact that the latter are relatively much poorer. The stereotyped character of the foreign trade and the absence of initiative and enterprise on the part of British manufacturers have long been matter of comment.

The reasons that the wants of the distant Chinese consumers are not supplied to a greater

extent by foreign merchants have been inquired into by Brenan, who thinks that "the trade would combine against the foreigner, and that men of small capital could not carry on the fight"; that "there is a lack of that feeling of enterprise which it is necessary to possess and exercise before the connections in the interior can be formed." A third reason, in his opinion, is supplied in the existence of "misgivings which fill the minds of the British merchants, lest they should not receive adequate support and protection from their own authorities when they are in difficulties—an apprehension that they will be left to shift for themselves, and that the British authorities will allow them to suffer unjust losses." It is this lack of confidence in our Government that has discouraged the British merchant and caused him to avoid any venture except such as he knows to be quite safe.*

It would be to the advantage of foreign merchants as a body to take trouble to examine patiently the actual conditions of life among the Chinese, in

* "A long and painful experience of thwarted efforts has had such a discouraging effect on foreigners in China that a condition of stagnation has come to be accepted as in the nature of things.

"A merchant is not a missionary. He derives little satisfaction from being assured that his complaint is well founded, and that he is entitled to reparation; he looks at his chances of obtaining reparation, and if, as frequently happens, he sees that these are remote, and that his officials can do no more for him than address futile remonstrances to the Chinese authorities, he retires from the unprofitable business, and, instead of spending his time and money in upholding treaty rights, he devotes these to other purposes where the prospects are more encouraging."—Brenan, "China," No. 1909. 1897.

order to deduce therefrom some fresh ideas, based on something better than mere conjecture, as to how to supply the wants of the people. How to extend commercial measures in China peacefully, without the unnecessary intervention of war, is a problem to which attention was directed as far back as forty years ago, and which need not have baffled our statesmen had they only been guided by an intelligent appreciation of facts. At present we are only on the fringe of China,* with merely one shaft partially driven into the heart of the country—the Yangtsze. Open China, develop internal industries, especially mining. The more the exports of China are increased the greater will be the foreign import trade. Bring goods under the eyes of the population in the interior, and, if you deliver a good and cheap article, the Chinaman will buy.

The Chinaman is clannish and conservative, but he is remarkably free from prejudice, religious or patriotic, especially in matters of tangible interest. Unlike the Japanese, he has a natural objection to alter his clothes, for they suit him better than any other. But he has no objection to purchasing the article which he judges to be the cheapest and best, wherever it may come from; and moreover—an important point—he has a taste for luxuries, if he

* Quand on parle de la Chine on oublie trop que le contact n'est encore établi avec la civilisation occidentale que sur quelques points, que l'on peut considérer comme perdus dans la masse. L'immense majorité des Chinois ne connaissent ni l'Européen ni les produits européens.—*The Lyons Commercial Mission.*

can afford them.* He is very sensible in his economy, and if he prefers the home-made article, it is because he finds it cheaper and more enduring. Native patterns of cloth, both woollen and cotton, will find buyers, if laid down cheaper than the native article. Though the Chinese are conservative, foreign articles are creeping into use. Clocks, watches, matches, lamps, red blankets are now seen not only everywhere in the seaport towns, and near the coast, but far inland. But the manufacturer at home is ignorant of the requirements of the Chinese, and the merchant abroad dislikes the work of forcing manufactures into the interior. The business is regarded as unprofitable; and it, of course, requires extraordinary exertion, knowledge of the language, and study of the country.†

Grave loss of business is caused to English manufacturers by an unbending adherence to established standards. This defect in our system, which has

* Talking of the non-Chinese inhabitants of China and of the absence among them of much taste for luxury, Bourne remarks: "The Chinese everywhere emphatically has (this taste); he may be trusted to buy luxuries to the full extent of his means. It is this quality which will some day make the foreign trade of China of gigantic dimensions."

† What can be accomplished in this direction has recently been made clear by the enterprise of Messrs. Coats, the sewing-thread manufacturers, and their able agent, Mr. Wenyon, who has opened thirty agencies in the interior, south of the Yangtsze.

Bourne lays special stress upon the importance of commercial recruits learning colloquial Chinese, "enough to talk about a very narrow range of subjects." Mr. Bell, of the Blackburn mission, learnt enough Mandarin in six months to make himself understood on everyday subjects. To make a Chinese scholar of a youth, would, as Bourne truly remarks, ruin him.

been so long a trait of our countrymen, has been repeatedly dwelt on by consular officers and many travellers, but so far with but little effect.

Great cheapness is essential for the present, and until the country is further opened, in order to bring a commodity within the narrow means of the general Chinese consumer; and it has been pointed out that "the general character of the Chinaman, which combines great thrift with minute attention to detail in business transactions, has the result that a very slight difference of price in favour of one of two competing articles gives it, in the Chinese market, a disproportionately great advantage. The point is of especial interest in view of the keen competition between foreign producers for the markets of China which are now about to be opened up; it is probable that relatively slight advantages of trade, whether enjoyed in respect of railway rates, port dues, transit duties, or otherwise, would tell more heavily in the Far East than in any other market of the world." *

In manufactures the Chinaman could not now compete with the English market if there were a proper appreciation of Chinese wants and anything like reasonable facilities for delivering our goods. In China, nails, needles, tacks, scissors, razors, all of the most primitive character, but suitable to the wants of the people, are produced; but the process is slow and comparatively expensive. China is not, and cannot become, a manufacturing country, until coal, iron, and other industries, and above all the

* United States Diplomatic and Consular Reports, 1898.

communications, are properly developed. When the cost of coal is diminished by improved methods, steam and machinery can be used for Chinese manufactures, but not till then. It is in her mineral resources that chiefly lies the future wealth of China, but there is also much to be done in the direction of the improvement of the products of the soil.

The question of the value of our China trade has lately been under discussion, and it has been questioned whether there was reason to hope for any great expansion. What was the view of Lord Palmerston, the one English statesman who seems to have understood the Chinese question?

"Everybody must know that on the extension of our commerce," he said in a debate in the House of Commons in 1864, "depend the prosperity of our country, the accumulation of our capital, the abundance of our revenues, and the strength and prosperity of the nation. Any measure, therefore, calculated to increase the commercial relations of the country is deserving of praise, because it accords with the interests and wishes of the country. It was long felt that China would open a vast field of commercial enterprise to us. There can be no doubt that, among other things, the great expansion of commerce with that Empire has enabled us to meet, without disaster, the unfortunate obstruction to our commerce and manufactures occasioned by events still going on in America. . . . What must be the commercial advantages to this country if it can have an unimpeded, uninterrupted commerce with one-third of the human race!"

How different was the view of Bright!

"Lord Palmerston," he said, "attempted to persuade the House that the trade with China—the most miserable trade in the world when compared with the magnitude of the population—was of so great importance to the working classes of this country, that it was worth while to indulge in the policy which he has carried on,

and to encounter the greater expenses which have been incurred. Now I will venture to say that our trade with China—I speak of our exports from England to China for many years back; I believe for thirty years—has not left one single farthing of profit."

Not less emphatic was Cobden in his condemnation of the Chinese trade:

"If you look back for the last thirty-five years," he said, "you will find that China is the only country that has disappointed you; that is, that the exports to China have not kept pace with the natural increase of your trade in other directions. Last year your exports to China were £3,800,000, your exports to the whole of the world £146,000,000: so that you only send 2½ per cent. of your exports to China. If you run your eye over the table of exports you will find that China stands only twelfth in the list of your foreign customers, that it stands even below Brazil and Egypt."

Cobden, it will be seen, saw no hope of any expansion whatever, just as the political economists of to-day, the disciples of Cobden, see no hope for the future. Yet British trade with China in forty years has increased more than fourfold, and that on a field unopened, while we are on the eve of an industrial development in China which will revolutionise the world.

The net total value of imports and exports in 1896 was £55,768,500, and the total gross value £57,274,000, of which British dominions contributed £39,271,000, leaving for all other nations £18,003,000.*

* Of this amount (according to the *Board of Trade Journal*):

Japan contributed	£4,795,000
Rest of Europe	4,585,000
Russia	2,856,000
Other nations	5,767,000
	18,003,000

In estimating the commercial interests of foreign countries as regards China, the foregoing returns are significant, showing as they do that Great Britain not only carries 82 per cent. of the total foreign trade with China, but pays 76 per cent. of the dues and duties collected in that trade.

It will thus be seen that her interest is very large. It may safely be asserted that, with the aid of India, Australia, Hongkong, and Singapore, and of the British markets of Africa and America, she has absorbed considerably more than four-fifths of the whole trade done by China with foreign countries. Hongkong having no Custom House, no figures, unfortunately, are available to indicate the volume of its commerce. As shown

The percentage of carrying trade under foreign flags was:

British	82.04
German	7.49
Japanese	1.34
French	2.00
Russian	0.59
Other nations	5.54
	100.00

The percentage of revenue (dues and duties) paid under foreign flags:

British	76.04
German	10.12
French	2.95
Japanese	2.28
Russian	1.90
Other nations	6.71
	100.00

elsewhere,* the ever-increasing prosperity of Hongkong has been marvellous.

The trade of the chief ports is shown in a convenient form:

1896.

Gross Value of Trade.		Tonnage.	
		Gross.	British.
	£		
Niuchwang (port of Manchuria)	3,424,000	664,000	349,600
Tientsin (port of N. China) .	9,000,000	1,241,645	583,000
Shanghai (emporium for N. and C. China) . . .	32,400,000	8,000,000	4,500,000
(*Note.*—The British share of the gross trade of Shanghai was £16,500,000, or over 50 per cent., and of the import trade, £13,933,000 out of £18,585,000, or 75 per cent.)			
	£		
Canton	6,669,000	Nearly all passing through Hongkong.	
Kaulun	7,197,000		
Swatow	4,000,000	Largely passing through Hongkong.	

In considering the foreign trade with China it should be borne in mind that the trade through Tongking by the Red River route is almost entirely a transit trade from Hongkong, and that the trade of Russia is chiefly characterised by its absence.

* See chapter xii.

Since its opening to foreign commerce in 1843, the growth of Shanghai has been rapid and steady, though, like Hongkong, subject to vicissitudes, of which the chief was the Taiping rebellion, which devastated the adjoining country.

The amount of smuggling by junks along the coast is known to be very considerable. At the ports open to foreign trade, the Foreign Customs take cognisance only of cargoes carried in foreign-built ships (whether foreign-owned or Chinese); and alongside the foreign Customs is the native custom-house, still controlling the trade in native junks and levying duties according to a tariff of its own. Besides the ports open to foreign trade, too, there are also a great number of places, both on the coast and inland, where the Chinese Government have, from time immemorial, established custom-houses.*

The United States are deeply concerned in the China question, both from the industrial and political point of view. Already compelled by the force of circumstances to embark on a foreign policy and to look increasingly to foreign markets, they cannot but feel that the question is of vital importance to themselves. And it is evident that the Pacific

* These are known by the generic name of "kwan," and as such are readily distinguished from the modern likin stations, which are generally termed "chia" or "ka." It would be tedious to enumerate all these places, but briefly they include every port of any importance on the coast and inland waters, and certain passes on the main trade routes, such as Changchiakou and Shanhaikwan on the northern frontier, and Taiping and Kanchau between Kwangtung and Kiangsi.—CONSUL-GENERAL JAMIESON, "China."

Slope, though at present playing but a small part, is more closely concerned in the ultimate development of China than any other section of the States. These Pacific States are possessed of enormous natural resources: their manufactures, while still of minor importance, have quadrupled in twenty years, and will, in the course of time, find the most advantageous market in the Far East. And when the Nicaragua Canal is made, the Atlantic States also will be brought into close connection with China and the whole of the Far East.*

The volume of the United States trade with China represents more than one-seventh the entire foreign trade of the Empire in 1896. While the import trade from China has increased slowly, the export trade to China has increased 126 per cent. in ten years, and is over 50 per cent. larger than the German exports.†

The export of cotton cloths amounted to £1,497,000 in 1897, or nearly one-half the entire value of cotton cloths sent abroad by the United States. The

* See "The Key of the Pacific," A. R. Colquhoun.

† EXPORTS TO CHINA.

Products of	Year.	Value.
		£
United Kingdom .	1896	8,540,000
United States. .	1897	3,596,000
Germany . .	1896	2,264,000

"Report on Trade between the United States and China."—HUGH O'BEIRNE.

export of kerosene oil from the States to China now ranks second in importance to that of cotton goods, and is likely to increase at a rapid rate. The Chinese demand is quickly growing, and the export from the United States to China has more than trebled in value in the past ten years.*

The Russian oil has hitherto been the only serious foreign competitor of the American product, but the Langkat oil is coming rapidly into use. The exports of wheat flour reached a value, in 1897, of £678,000, and chemicals, dyes, &c., £200,000.

The United States export to China chiefly cottons and mineral oils. And, while England—which so far practically controls the China trade—has most to lose by the partition of China, even should she receive a large share, the United States are deeply concerned in the question, for their trade is considerable and of great promise. At present it is restricted to commodities which would be hard to sell to any Chinese port not under the conditions of equal trade, and probably impossible to sell in any Asiatic port controlled by Russia or France.

* The United States export of kerosene oil to China has been :

Year.	Value.	
	Currency.	Sterling.
	Dollars.	£
1888 . . .	1,466,000	293,000
1897 . . .	4,498,000	899,000

Japan as a manufacturing country, as well as one with political aspirations, is an important factor in the China question. Year by year the quantity of raw material imported and of manufactured articles exported increases steadily. Unsuited for agriculture, and with a dense population greater than that of some Western lands, Japan is forced to find her future in industrial development rather than agriculture. And everything possible is being done by Japanese statesmen and publicists to convert Japan from an agricultural into a manufacturing country. Japan has now 1,000,000 spindles running, and makes matches not only for herself but for China, the Straits, India, and other countries, and, as regards cheapness, in many lines she has distanced all competitors.

Enthusiastic politicians and writers in Japan, and not there alone, were sanguine enough to predict the time when Japan, "the Eastern England," * would supply all the markets of Europe with European articles, but more sober views now prevail, and the counsel to-day given to Japanese manufacturers by their leaders is to cultivate the special productions in which Japan excels other countries, such as silk, tea, artistic

* Japan has never been fully opened to foreign trade. The ports in Japan open to foreign commerce are six in number, namely, Yokohama, Kobe (or Hiogo), Osaka, Nagasaki, Hakodate, and Niigata. There are thirteen other ports where trade with foreign countries is permitted under certain conditions, but these ports are only open to the Japanese flag, or to foreign vessels under special charter to Japanese.

manufactures, and articles requiring great expertness of fingers.*

The enterprise and self-confidence of the Japanese led them to believe that they could succeed where Western nations had done so, and their first attempts at imitating foreign manufactures attracted attention, but the general conclusion in this matter now is that Japan is overrated as a manufacturing country.

A most marked feature of commercial enterprise in Japan is that commercial morality there is inferior to that of China. There is always a tendency to deteriorate in all articles, for as soon as their superiority or cheapness has won for them a place in trade the standard is lowered and something inferior is produced. Gradual deterioration, as Brenan remarks, seems the inevitable fate of all articles of Japanese manufacture.

In the matter of adhering to contracts the Chinaman stands exceedingly high, but not so the Japanese.

* "Japan, they argue, may easily beat the more civilised countries of Europe and America in articles where artistic skill and hand labour play a large part, but to compete in their markets with mechanical manufactures in which they are themselves so proficient is in their opinion for the present out of the question. As to the semi-civilised nations of Asia, Japan's endeavour should be to supply them with two classes of merchandise: first, such articles as Japan already manufactures for her own use; and secondly, articles imitated from foreign patterns and designs, which are already in demand in Asiatic countries. Japan must begin with ruder articles and gradually advance to better and finer articles. The commercial policy advocated by those in authority is to strive to attain perfection by assiduous practice, and meantime to sell the work of their 'prentice hands to those semi-civilised peoples who are satisfied with cheap and inferior commodities."—BRENAN, "Japan."

It is impossible to keep the ordinary Japanese to his contract: when he sees the market going against him, he will find some excuse to evade his engagement. The foreign merchants in Japan meet with difficulties unknown in China. No one would at present trust to a Japanese merchant either to faithfully execute a contract or to draw a bill on shipment of the goods.

Japan looks to China as her best customer, and very wisely. But it is unlikely that she will secure the China market as a whole, for not only is all the trade between the two countries in Chinese hands, even in Japan, but the Chinese are establishing themselves in positions in Japan which the Japanese have no excuse for allowing them to occupy. China, also, is already becoming a serious competitor as regards coal, and at the present rate of increase the day is not far distant when Chinese coal will be used in Japan; this, too, quite apart from the coming development of the coal-fields by means of steam and railways.

As Japan has to import her raw material from India and China, it is most unlikely that she will be able to undersell the product of the Bombay or Shanghai mills in neutral markets. It is more probable that the Chinese will, under foreign guidance, prove the superior. Chinese labour is undoubtedly cheaper and more efficient than Japanese.

Inland taxation in China acts as a great impediment to foreign trade. Every merchant can bear testimony to the difficulties, delays, and "squeezes"

which have to be submitted to in bringing produce to market, or getting our manufactures into the interior.

The question of likin and inland taxation is dealt with by Brenan and Bourne, and has been exhaustively treated by Jamieson in an extremely able report. It is in the south that the mischief is most felt. Bourne gives a striking example of this evil, close to Canton; he says:

"A piece of grey shirtings sent from Canton to Fatshan, a very large manufacturing town fifteen miles south-west of that city, would pay—

	Amount.
	Tael.
At Canton, as above	0.204
Entry (kwa-hao) paid to Hoppo, 0.072 *tael*, *plus* 20 per cent. "expenses" squeeze	0.092
At Fatshan, cancellation, hsiao-hao, a "squeeze" that has gradually increased from a nominal payment to about	0.18
	0.476

or about 25 per cent. *ad valorem;* this was the amount demanded in June 1897; no doubt a great deal less was paid on the average.

"By taking a transit pass for these goods to Fatshan, of course a great deal would be saved; but the Canton Government has so far succeeded in resisting our right to transit passes, helped by the fact that the import trade is, as I have explained, in the hands of natives, and by the monopoly-ring of likin officials and foreign compradores."

There is no need to multiply instances. The duties, as fixed by tariff, are neither excessive nor prohibitive; but, like so many of the Confucian maxims, they are seldom or never acted on. The tariff, in fact, is a dead letter. Its provisions, in practice, vary according to the squeezing power of the local mandarins.*

The heavy internal taxation† has always acted like a paralysis on foreign trade before it could reach a few miles inland from the treaty ports. Owing to the increasing absorption of the provincial revenues by the Imperial Government, the seaboard provinces, which to a large extent depended on maritime duties, have resorted to ruinous inland taxation. This has impoverished and discontented all classes and restricted trade. The turbulent population of Kwang-tung have with difficulty been restrained from showing their resentment at the exhaustive taxation.

"Likin," which used to be regarded as illegal, as

* "In estimating the provincial opposition to the scheme, it must be borne in mind that the effect of the transit-pass system is not only to reduce and regulate the inland dues, but it is also to transfer so much revenue from the provincial to the Imperial Exchequer, and between these departments there is a perpetual struggle. In agreeing that all the inland charges might be commuted by one payment, the Central Government made a bargain profitable to itself, and left the execution of it to those at whose expense it had been made."—BRENAN, "China."

† In the Chifu Convention the following clause occurs:—"The Chinese Government agrees that Transit Duty Certificates shall be framed under one rule at all ports, no difference being made in the conditions set forth therein; and that, so far as imports are concerned, the nationality of the person possessing and carrying these is immaterial."

one of the many "squeezes" imposed by the mandarins, is, in Jamieson's opinion, just as legal as any other form of taxation, being imposed by Imperial Decree, the highest form of legislation known to China. Its expediency, he says, is quite another matter, being as objectionable as possible. In its present shape it first appeared about 1853; but it was not till 1860–61, when the measures adopted to suppress the Taiping rebellion necessitated increased expenditure, that it became universal.* The whole of the likin, it may be said, is borne by the trade of the Yangtsze and the Canton Rivers and their affluents, and this fact indicates in a very striking manner where the real wealth of the country lies.

There are many reasons why it would be advantageous to have the whole of the taxes on trade consolidated and put under one system.

At present there are three or four different sets of officials collecting taxes from the same goods, and

* The present likin tariff is based upon a notification of July 24, 1865, as a result of certain inquiries made by order of the provincial Government. Regarding the likin barriers, Jamieson says Their numbers and frequency depend on the amount of the rade, and the extent to which it will stand taxing without being absolutely strangled. In some places, as along the lower ports of the Grand Canal, the barriers follow one another at intervals of twenty miles or so. In other places, where trade is scanty and the barriers can be turned by *détours*, there are few, if any. A tariff is arranged, and is supposed to be published for general information, but nothing is more difficult than to get accurate information either from the merchants or officials on this point. In point of fact neither party seems to pay much attention to the authorised tariff. Nearly all boats are passed by a system of bargaining, the officials ask so much, the merchant makes a bid, and they haggle till they come to terms."

sometimes even competing with one another. This is well exemplified in the province of Canton, where there are (1) the Foreign Maritime Customs, (2) the Native Maritime Customs under the Hoppo, (3) the Inland Native Customs, and (4) the likin officials; all four levying trade taxes which cover almost exactly the same ground. To these may be added the salt controller, who has subordinates scattered over the province. Consolidation would lead to gain, not only on the part of the merchant, but also of the Imperial revenue.

The remedy for the present unsatisfactory condition of our trade with China is the same as for the political situation. It consists in a revolution of our methods, whether governmental or private. Increased energy, activity, and determination are necessary if we are to hold our own in the commercial or political contest. The key of the position, which is a politico-commercial one, is that Government should be strong, resolute, and inspire confidence. That is an absolute essential. If that be wanting, as it has been hitherto, then it is needless to discuss further steps. But, provided such confidence is established, then the British merchant must be encouraged and supported through thick and thin. British enterprise must be pushed inland into every crevice, and every opportunity must be utilised in commercial and industrial matters. The construction of a railway system throughout the country, the use of steam navigation on all the waterways, the opening of mines, will

afford scope for our most strenuous efforts, our highest abilities. On the side of the manufacturer and merchant the apathy and want of adaptability which have hindered progress must be shaken off, and towards this end it is necessary that they should revolutionise their methods. First and foremost there must be knowledge of the country, its conditions, and especially its language; there must be the readiness to do the disagreeable business, to deal with the odds and ends of commerce, which hitherto have been left mainly to the German.*

One reform in our system has been repeatedly urged, namely, the appointment of a specially commissioned official to deal with commercial questions.† He should combine in his person special qualifications for performing the class of work now inadequately carried on by some twenty consuls, all working independently; and the appointment should take the form of a superintendent of trade, with powers altogether above those of a mere secretary. That was the original idea in dealing with China,

* In 1897 three important commercial missions, from the Blackburn and Lyons Chambers of Commerce and from Germany, visited China, and investigated on the spot the conditions of trade. It is understood that the reports of the French and German missions are not to be made public. Mr. Bourne, who took charge of the Blackburn mission, has already published a valuable report, and the reports of the commercial experts, Mr. Nevill and Mr. Bell, are just about to be published.

† Government recently dealt with this question in an almost Chinese manner, the *title* of commercial attaché being added to an already overworked official of Shanghai. This incident affords an admirable example of the art of "makee-look-see."

and it is worthy of adoption now. Such a superintendent should work in close touch with an advisory board of merchants, the nucleus for which exists already in the China Association of Shanghai and its London branch. The Foreign Office and the British Minister in Peking should also be in constant consultation with this advisory board, and be influenced by them, and not merely pay heed to their counsel when it is too late.

It is of primary importance that the superintendent of trade should be a "live" man, and not the typical bureaucrat bound in red tape, and that he should not rest content with compiling statistics and writing reports, but make it the cardinal point of his duties to place himself in the closest relationship with traders, British and native, throughout the length and breadth of China. Such an appointment, provided only the right man were selected, would inspire confidence, stimulate initiative, and lead to substantial results.

CHAPTER VII

GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

PERHAPS the simplest conception of the Government of China is to regard it as an ancient theocracy, the Emperor being Pontifex Maximus,* and ruling by divine right. There is no Church or priesthood, no dogmas to become obsolete, no ritual to be corrupted, no scriptures to be perverted or criticised, but only one Solitary Man standing between Heaven and Earth. Hence, perhaps, the unexampled duration of a system whose ethereal essence, unencumbered with perishable integuments, is superior to time and change. The Emperor worships Heaven pure and simple. It is his place to declare the will of Heaven to the people, which it must be admitted he does with much modesty and reserve. He is responsible to Heaven alone, and bears in his own person the blame of Heaven's judgments on the people, humbling himself in sackcloth and ashes to avert the divine wrath.† But as none can share

* "A l'article Chine, on verra que l'empereur est le premier pontife, et combien le culte est auguste et simple."—VOLTAIRE, *Dictionnaire Philosophique.*

† "Myriads of innocent people are involved by me, the One man," said the Emperor Taukwang, in a penitential memorial to Imperial

his responsibility, so none can share his authority. Such is what we, with a shade of irony, call the "Celestial Empire."

Viewed from the terrestrial standpoint, we reach the same result by an inverse process. The Imperial structure may, with as much accuracy, be regarded as the supreme development of the family idea. The people are the children, the Emperor the great father: absolute obedience on the one side, protection and nourishment on the other; such is the theoretical relationship. The family, the master key to all Chinese polity, is a mighty power in support of order culminating in the Throne. Parricide is the most heinous of crimes, and rebellion is parricide, whence it comes about that in a country where, in spite of certain appearances to the contrary, human life is peculiarly sacred, sedition is suppressed by wholesale massacre.

It is of course hard to bring these lofty ideals into harmony with the grisly reality of Palace intrigues which place this or that infant in the seat of the Son of Heaven to the accompaniment of assassination, but it is convenient nevertheless to bear the theory in mind, were it of no greater utility than to keep us from error in interpreting the forms and phraseology of edicts and other State papers.

More important for practical purposes is the Chinese civil administration, which may be considered apart from the abstract theory of govern-

Heaven, on the occasion of a drought sent as a punishment for hi shortcomings.

ment. And the first point deserving notice is the position of the absolute Monarch in the governing machine. He does not, in practice, govern any more despotically than a constitutional sovereign or the president of a Republic: he only says Yes or No to projects submitted to him or refers them "to the Board concerned for further consideration and report." Though the power of initiative is vested in the Emperor, it is sparingly used. Besides the check automatically applied by the official mechanism, an influence less definite though no less effective over the acts of the Sovereign is exerted by the body of educated opinion. From the literary oligarchy, indeed, Huc considers the Central Government derives its real inspiration and moral authority. The regular procedure is by memorials, which are addressed direct to the Throne and, as has been stated, are generally sent to the Boards to report upon. This may cause convenient delay in giving a decision, and the members of the Great Council have also their final say. In the end the matter may be approved, dismissed, or deferred by the Emperor on the advice of the Privy Council. The system is probably as effective a way of sifting a question as a parliamentary discussion would be, especially as the Chinese Government has its own way of making officials personally responsible for the advice they give. The operation of this principle of personal responsibility runs, indeed, through the whole scheme of Chinese life, and is important to be kept in mind by all who have dealings with them,

whether political or commercial. An official who criticises the conduct of another in a matter of difficulty is often taken at his word and sent himself to carry out his own alternative plans. In this way some of the results of party government are attained by a different process.

The attempt to classify the Chinese system of administration so as to bring it within the group of governmental forms with which the Western peoples are familiar is apt to lead to erroneous impressions, for it cannot be described by any of the names in common use. If we call it a despotism, we are confronted with facts which would show it to be the most democratic polity extant, and if we call the Empire a federation of independent states, we are met by the absolute power vested in the Throne to remove the provincial governors at pleasure. It is best, therefore, to leave the system without a name, except that it is Chinese; for the "labels" have in times past sometimes misled Western governments into assuming what was non-existent, and into basing their policy on the fallacy.

The ultimate unit, the germ-cell as we may call it, of the Chinese body, is the family, compact and indivisible, theoretically living on the soil which contains the family altar and the family tomb.* It is the first course of the political pyramid, which is but little affected by the storms that may blast its apex and which survives the wreck of dynasties and the march

* In dealing with the Chinese this all-important fact is usually forgotten by Westerners, with whom the *individual* is the unit.

of conquerors. Groups of families constitute villages, which are self-governing, and the official who ventures to trench on their immemorial rights to the point of resistance is, according to an official code not confined to China, disavowed by his superiors and generally finds a change of scene imperative. The family system, with its extension to village and town groups, the respective heads of which are responsible, in an ascending series, for all the individuals, is the cheapest form of government extant,* for it dispenses with police, while disposing effectually of offenders against the peace or respectability of the community.

Where the aboriginal government, which has grown, so to say, out of the soil, meets the artificial rule which has been imposed from above, the line cannot perhaps be drawn with absolute precision,

* So cheap that, according to M. Simon, Chinese taxation amounts to three francs per head of the population; and so good, that crime is comparatively rare. In the preservation of order the interested vigilance of the people themselves goes hand in hand with the official organisation in the prevention of disturbances or crime. And both forces receive a vital sanction from the indissoluble tie which binds every individual to the family, even in exile. As has been well said, "The man who knows that it is almost impossible, except by entire seclusion, to escape from the company of secret or acknowledged emissaries of Government, will be cautious of offending the laws of his country, knowing, as he must, that though he should himself escape, yet his family, his kindred, or his neighbours will suffer for his offence; that if unable to recompense the sufferers, it will probably be dangerous for him to return home; or if he does, it will be most likely to find his property in the possession of neighbours or officials, who feel conscious of security in plundering one whose offences have for ever placed him under a ban."—*The Fortnightly Review*, 1895, p. 578.

but it may for the purposes of this work be assumed that the official hierarchy begins with the *chi hsien*, who rules a district (*hsien*) about as large as an English county. He is usually called by foreigners the "district magistrate," but this title, like that of an Indian "collector," very inadequately represents his multifarious functions, which are educational, fiscal, judicial, and all that belongs to an executive; indeed, as the last link in the long official chain which connects the Imperial throne with the peasant's hut, there is nothing that concerns the life of the people which does not concern this very hard-worked officer. As the family is the unit of the Chinese nation, so may the district be considered the unit of the administrative system of the Empire.

A group of districts forms a department, or *fu*, which is governed by the *chi fu*, or prefect, whose place of residence takes rank as a "fu" city, as Hangchau fu. The prefect is the court of appeal from the magistrate.

A group of departments forms a circuit, at the head of which is an official whose title is very familiar to readers of newspapers—the *taotai*, or intendant of circuit. If the magistrate be the important official for the Chinese people, the taotai is the important one for foreigners, for he is the pivot on which all business outside the territorial administration turns. Meadows tells us* that the taotai is the lowest civilian who exercises a direct *ex-officio*

* "Chinese and their Rebellions." 1856.

authority over the military. Though he would naturally reside in a departmental or "fu" city, the exigencies of business often require him to select one of district rank, as, for instance, Shanghai or Tientsin, which are both mere district cities brought into prominence by the course of foreign business. Indeed, Tientsin is not only the official residence of the territorial and other taotais, but has been also the seat of the vice-regal court of the province of Chihli ever since 1870, when the great massacre took place there. Its peculiar position as the gate of the capital also renders the presence in Tientsin of an officer of the highest responsibility a necessity of State.

The next grade in the administrative system is the province, the chief executive officer of which is the governor, or *fu tai*. The number of the provinces has remained for such a length of time eighteen that China proper is usually known to the inhabitants simply as "The Eighteen Provinces." Each province is autonomous, with a difference. It is as independent as an army corps, possessing the complete machinery of government, civil and military, educational and fiscal, judicial and penal. The province administers its own revenue, provides for its own defence, holds its own competitive examinations, and performs all State functions without any interference from the Central Government. But it receives its governors and officials from Peking, and it has to remit tribute—or, as it may be called, its quota of the Imperial revenue—to the capital. This

done, the province is freed from all interference from above. The whole duty of a governor may be summed up in two articles: Keep the peace and pay the tribute. The governor is absolute, the chain of responsibility in the ranks below him being complete. The provincial officials next in rank below the governor are the finance minister, the criminal judge, and the literary chancellor. The governor, however, is the only one who in his sole name enjoys the privilege of memorialising the Throne, and, as he is thus in a position to report on all his subordinates, thereby wields absolute authority over them. We thus reach the last link in the chain. The district magistrate connects the official hierarchy with the people; the governor with the Throne. There remains, however, another high provincial officer, who is not essential to the system, since in certain cases he is dispensed with, and that is the *tsung tu* or *chih tai* or governor-general, who usually superintends the affairs of two provinces, each having its own governor, and sometimes only one, as in the case of Chihli and Szechuan, while some provinces, as Shantung, have no governor-general. This high authority is rather inaptly called "viceroy" by foreigners, a word which finds no equivalent in the Chinese title. Those best known are: The Viceroy of Chihli, the office held for twenty-four years by Li Hung Chang; the Viceroy of Kiangnan (Kiangsu, Anhwei, and Kiangsi provinces), whose capital is Nanking; the Viceroy of the Hu Kwang, or Liang Hu (Hunan and Hupei),

whose residence is at Wuchang, on the Yangtsze; the Viceroy of Min-Chê (abbreviation for provinces of Fukien and Che kiang), who resides in Fuchau; the Viceroy of the Liang Kwang (the two Kwangs, Kwangtung and Kwangsi), whose capital is Canton; of Yun-Kwei (Yunnan and Kweichau), who resides at Yunnan fu; of Shen-Kan (Shensi and Kansu), who resides at Sian fu.

Great as are the powers of governors and governors-general, that of life and death is not one of them, except in certain special cases—such as piracy or crimes which may be construed into seditiousness—where drumhead court-martial would apply in Western countries. In ordinary cases no death-warrant can be signed save by the Emperor himself. As is notorious, the Chinese system in practice does not protect the accused from the misery of protracted imprisonment.

Two important characteristics of Chinese officialdom need to be constantly borne in mind by foreigners who desire to have a just appreciation of the merits and demerits of the man and of the system. The first is that the aspirant enters the ranks through the portal of competitive literary examinations. These examinations form, perhaps, the most remarkable feature in the whole fabric of Chinese polity; they are so ancient, and have taken such a complete hold of the ambitions of the people. No part of the administration is so minutely organised as this. The prize of a literary degree, and then a higher, and yet a higher, is the blue

ribbon for which the whole nation seems to be contending; at once an honourable distinction and a passport to official appointment. The gaining of the prize is an occasion of public festivity in the birthplace of the successful candidate. The results of the system are, as might be expected, both good and bad; but at any rate it secures that every Chinese official shall be a scholar, and generally an expert in style and penmanship. Not only on entering the service, but in his subsequent career, the power of the pen serves its owner as well as the power of the tongue does in parliamentary countries. "Junius" would have risen to high office in China. One of the most prominent of the present viceroys is such another master of invective.

The second characteristic follows naturally from the first, and marks the shade in the picture. Scholarship being the essential qualification for office, no other is sought for, nor are the State functions so differentiated as that a young official can gain special training for any department of duty for which he might have particular aptitude. From the district magistrate upwards, one man has to discharge many duties, as revenue officer, literary examiner, coroner, sheriff, prison inspector, judge. From his first induction into public service the young official has to be jack-of-all-trades, and even when in the higher grades some separation of function takes place; it is a mere chance, or at least it depends on no consideration of special fitness for the duties, whether one is promoted to

be provincial judge, literary chancellor, or provincial treasurer. No doubt this promiscuous experience sharpens the general intelligence, and it is, perhaps, therefore, not so much a matter of surprise as it is sometimes thought that Chinese officials thrown into novel relations with foreigners should acquit themselves so well. Of course, the principal lesson of their lives is caution, which educates their instinct for evasion and delay. The reality, they think, will always keep, and it is never too late for compromise. Hence they become adepts at plausible representations, which are so ingenious as to puzzle, and sometimes nonplus, an inexperienced foreigner who attempts to follow them through their mazes of argument. But they are not at all disconcerted when confronted with their own false premises. Honour is not stained by what is euphemistically termed by the Chinese "big-talk"; in other words, untruth. From the point of view of the efficiency of the Government service, however, it is obvious that the jack-of-all-trades system must be fatal whenever an emergency arises. During the Japanese War its breakdown was conspicuous in the case of Li Hung Chang. He alone had to conduct the campaign, as Minister of War and as Commander-in-Chief of both Army and Navy, while at the same time he had to carry on his territorial duties as Governor-General of a large province, his special duties as Superintendent of Trade, and numerous other functions. And all this without any organised staff! Yet the Emperor

and his advisers have probably to this day no rea insight into the reasons of their military collapse, so completely are they wrapped up in their traditional practices, in military tactics two thousand years old, and in the bow-and-arrow exercises of the Manchu garrison in Peking.

Taking the scheme as a whole, and as applicable to internal affairs, which were the sole concern of the Empire until fifty years ago, the Chinese administration was very well thought out. The Government neither attempted impossibilities itself nor expected miracles of its distant agents. It could not follow out the intricacies of every local question that might arise in so vast an Empire, so it cut every such consideration short by simply making the provincial authorities responsible for success, which amounted to little more, as has been said, than keeping the peace and paying the tribute.* The "barbarians" on the coast were, of course, a serious element of disturbance, and a man who had a reputation for "soothing and bridling" them had a good chance of receiving an appointment at a treaty port. The essential thing always was to prevent the intruders from ever being heard of in the capital.

* "Keeping the peace," however, includes the absolute obligation to discover and bring to justice an offender, an obligation which extends in an unbroken chain through all official grades from the lowest to the highest, who are successively responsible, like the series of endorsers of a bill of exchange. No excuse for failure is admissible, and it is on this principle that the governor of a province is punished for a crime if he has not been vigilant enough to prevent it, or energetic enough to arrest the culprit.

Many precautions were devised to prevent any kind of malfeasance in the provinces, such precautions, indeed, as must *à priori* have commended themselves to any wise ruler. For one thing, the term of office in one post was limited to three years. Further, a mandarin could not hold office in the province of his birth. By such means as these it was sought to guard against local interests growing up to compete with Imperial duty, and especially against territorial attachments which might become the bases of disloyalty to the Throne. Where distances were so great and communications so slow, such checks cannot have been considered to be superfluous, but the drawbacks to the system are obvious, for it is the absence of local and territorial attachments which encourages some of the worst official abuses. Rapacity makes hay while the sun shines all the more ruthlessly when there is no tie of sentiment between the parties, and no forebodings of reprobation in old age or retirement in the locality where the family of the official is domiciled. Neither in such a short term of office is an official likely to interest himself in, still less to spend his own money on, local improvements, roads, bridges, &c., in a place which may know him no more during his whole official career. Some of the worst features of the Indian "Nabob" system are thereby perpetuated.

Checks of various other descriptions have been devised for keeping the mandarinate in the path of rectitude. The literary examinations and the

granting of degrees qualify an immense number of candidates for whom no immediate employment can be found, and besides these the number of officials temporarily out of office is always very large. These together form an army of expectants who congregate about every provincial capital on the chance of something turning up. They are at the disposal of the governor to fill chance vacancies *pro tem.*, to execute commissions, or to spy on the doings of other officials and make reports. It is in the ranks of these unemployed scribes that are found the chief literary assailants of foreign missionaries, and the fomenters of riots based on gross imputations which they circulate by placard and pamphlet.

A more organised form of precautionary measures is the institution of what is generally known as the Censorate, a body of men, fifty-six in number, who are appointed to "censure" in the various provinces and the capital itself whatever they see amiss in the conduct of any official, not even exempting the highest personages, and to watch over the welfare of the people. The memorials which these censors present are often wonderfully outspoken, and sometimes are efficacious for good. Occasionally, however, a too bold arraignment of the Imperial family draws down a fierce reprimand on the head of the author, and lucky for him if he escapes with that.

From the forms in use and the evident care that has been taken by the Imperial legislators to secure pure and efficient government, one would

be justified in concluding on theoretical grounds that the Chinese administration was a supremely good one; and those Western scholars who are engrossed in the study of Chinese lore have usually been inclined to that view. But between the theory and the practice in politico-ethical affairs there is necessarily a great difference, which is strongly accentuated in China by the enormous extent of its public service and the extraordinary length of time during which abuses have been propagating themselves. Not only are exceptions made to all salutary regulations—for instance, Li Hung Chang held one office for over twenty years—but evasions have become so systematised that, as in the giant forests of the Himalaya one is puzzled to distinguish between the parasite and the tree round which its luxuriant foliage is entwined, so in the Chinese administration the best principles are lost to view in a rank growth of false practice. Evasions have become legitimised by universal recognition. Peremptory orders are issued in the "tremble and obey" style; they are received with the profoundest obeisance; but they are not obeyed; and he who issued them forgets or at least ignores them, and there is an end. The war operations with Japan were carried on in this same fashion. Sham is the all-pervading element which reduces the finest precepts to nought, and as "they all do it," it seems to be considered that no one need feel aggrieved. Like a debased currency, it is as fair to buyer as to seller so long as it is current and no one is deceived.

To reach the heart of the national weakness, however, we must come to the apex of the pyramid, the Central Government itself. In all grades of the provincial service there is, in spite of the resources of evasion, a certain sense of responsibility, an apprehension of being called to account, the Argus eye of a master personated by an army of spies, a wholesome influence in keeping up efficiency and even—to a certain extent—purity. But in Peking these checks fail through sheer familiarity. There, one has nothing higher to defer to, nothing unseen to apprehend. A dissolute parent may, notwithstanding his own lapses, exercise a restraining influence on his family; but *quis custodiet custodes?* It is in the action of the Central Government, therefore, that we should expect to find the greatest inconsequence, the greatest vacillation, where gravitation has lost its direction, where the needle has no pole to turn to. Only seclusion could hide the weakness and rottenness of the Capital and of the Palace. The most casual visitor is met by proofs that the Government of the City is far behind that of any provincial town. As a town, indeed, it is laid out on a magnificent scale, and it once had sewers of Titanic proportions. But the streets are now cesspools, worn into huge hollows, in which during the summer rains drowning is no uncommon thing for man and beast. Such as the streets are, such is the Government. Its heart has also been worn away, and become a receptacle for waste material.

The normal machinery of Government consists of

six Boards: Revenue, Rites, Civil Office, Punishments, Works, and War. There are over these, and between them and the Emperor, two Councils, the Chün Chi, Grand Council of State, which is really a Privy Council of the Emperor, in whose presence its members meet for the despatch of business daily between four and six o'clock A.M., but, like the British Cabinet, it is not part of the Constitution. Of the highest rank is the Nei Ko, or Grand Secretariat and Imperial Chancery. This is the Court of Archives, and admission to its superior ranks confers the highest distinction attainable by Chinese officials. There are six Grand Secretaries (Chung T'ang), three being Chinese and three Manchu. Li Hung Chang enjoys that distinction among his other titles of rank. More influential than either of these, however, especially when the Monarch happens to be weak, are the Ministers of the Presence, a portion really of the Imperial Household, and always of the most exalted rank. Nor, when personal influence over the Emperor is in question, is it right to ignore the noble order of eunuchs which fills the crevices of Oriental courts.

As has been well said by Mayers, the scheme of the Central Government of China is not to assume any initiative, but to control the action of the provincial administrators, to register their proceedings, to remove them, and degrade or promote them as occasion may require. No legislative change or progress seems to be contemplated or provided for by

the Constitution. But as change was forced upon China from without, when the "barbarians" would no longer rest satisfied with intercourse with subordinate provincial officials, some accommodation had to be made by the Imperial authorities in order to admit of diplomatic relations in the capital. The first step in this direction was the establishment of what is now familiar as the Tsungli Yamên by Imperial decree in January 1861, which was originally composed of three Ministers who were also members of other Boards. Its numbers were increased from time to time, and now stand at eight—three Manchus and five Chinese. This new creation never acquired any status or authority until the pressure of external events compelled the Emperor's Council to make use of it, and to recognise it as an integral part of the Government. It was only in 1890 that it first figured in the Red Book, a complete record of State departments.

Pressed also by the needs of the time, another Board was constituted in 1890, which was to take the control of the navy out of the hands of Li Hung Chang. But there was no one connected with it who had any acquaintance with naval affairs, and when the Japanese War broke out in 1894, the members of the Board of Admiralty, none of whom knew a ship's stem from its stern, were fain to relinquish the control and let it revert to the one man who was deemed competent to take it. There was a talk of abolishing the institution after the war on the not unreasonable ground that there was no navy to manage.

Another office may be mentioned in connection with the new *régime* of foreign relations; it is that of the two Superintendents of Trade, one for the Northern and one for the Southern Coast. The former has been held since 1870 by the Viceroy of Chihli, whose official residence is at Tientsin; the latter by the Viceroy of the Liang Kiang, at Nanking. The first holder of the office in Tientsin was not, however, the Viceroy, whose court was located in the provincial capital, Paoting fu, a city some two hundred miles inland, but a Manchu of high degree, named Chunghow, known to fame in connection first with the Tientsin massacre of 1870, and next with the Livadia treaty, which was repudiated in Peking, and came near costing the Envoy his head. The odium incurred by Chunghow in connection with the massacre was scarcely deserved. He was a genial and conciliatory official. As Superintendent of Customs, his official duties lay much in the sphere of foreign affairs, and in all his relations with foreigners he made himself popular. But, although he was of high rank, and the only official of high standing in Tientsin, his authority was "not territorial, but commercial." The local officials, local organisations and forces, such as they were, owed no allegiance to Chunghow. They were under the Viceroy Tsêng Kwo Fan, who was at Paoting, and, beyond his own personal attendants, the Superintendent of Customs could not dispose of a corporal's guard. In the nature of things, his relations with the Viceroy were delicate, with the

Viceroy's subordinates still more so, and constant tact had to be exercised to avoid friction and collision. The imputation against Chunghow was that he, the highest official in the place, permitted the massacre, or at least made no effort, so far as was known, to prevent it. As the Chinese populace knew that something was brewing, it was universally believed by foreigners that Chunghow could not be ignorant of it, and therefore they insisted on his being held responsible, *more Sinico*. Whether it would have been possible for him to have interfered with the subordinates of so great a magnate as Tsêng Kwo Fan, and averted the mischief they were plotting, is very doubtful; but, knowing what we do of Chinese official circumspection, it would be unreasonable to expect it. Nor, even allowing that he could not but be aware that mischief was afoot, could it be supposed that Chunghow himself imagined the ghastly tragedy in which the inflamed passion of the mob actually culminated. It was not Chunghow, but the Viceroy Tsêng Kwo Fan, whom the Imperial Government held responsible for the massacre. It was he who was sent down to investigate and punish, after a fashion. Thereafter, the office of Superintendent of Trade was conferred on the Viceroy of the Province, who established his residence, during the business portions of the year, at Tientsin; indeed, Li Hung Chang often allowed several years to pass without visiting his provincial capital at all.

The two Superintendents of Trade are the natural

referees in matters connected with foreign commercial relations, the arbiters of all proposals involving innovations in the economic policy of the Government. They check and support each other, irresistible when united, but mutually paralysing when opposed. Hence the aim of adventurers has been to gain the suffrage of each of the two high authorities separately, and the most successful schemer of recent years is the one who gained, by various means, the confidence of both, and was thus able to combine their forces in his own support.

An interesting circumstance applying to the whole administrative system is that the officials are intensely laborious, have hardly ever a holiday except in case of serious illness or the time prescribed for mourning the death of a parent—which is also liable to be abrogated when the exigencies of the service demand it—and there is no superannuation. They work, like a cab-horse, till they drop. Amusements, also, are denied them. A Minister seen at a theatre would be promptly denounced by a censor. This severe *régime* is necessarily depressing to the whole official body. Its strictness, of course, leads to evasion, and the *Peking Gazette* is sometimes filled with the tragi-comic memorials of provincial mandarins, who enter into the minutest details of their pathological condition in order to obtain a brief holiday or to be excused from obeying the Imperial summons to the capital. The success of such appeals probably depends more on judicious palmistry than on the actual merits of the case.

Were it possible for us to set up the complete skeleton of Chinese polity, of which we have presented a very meagre sketch, we should still have gone but a short way towards a real apprehension of either its methods or its motives. For that, the dry bones must be clothed in flesh and blood, and we should need to know something of the cerebral functions of the organism, which experience alone can teach, and even that slowly and imperfectly. The closest observer will constantly be obliged to correct one observation by another, and the longer he lives the more he will feel the necessity of revising his generalisations. So much being premised, a few salient features of Chinese political psychology may be not unprofitably studied. The machine being fitted together, the dual question is, What sets it in motion, and what is it set to accomplish? To this, the general answer must of course be: The same impulse that sets every political machine in the world in motion, and for the same ends—individual ambition tempered by public spirit. Out of this combination the best and the worst results are obtained, depending on the proportions in which the two elements are blended. In the Government of China we need not hesitate to affirm that the mixture is not a favourable one, the personal being unduly preponderant over the altruistic factor. That Government, moreover, exhibits the widest discrepancy of any known system between theory and practice, the purest ideal cloaking the grossest aims; a terrible example, in fact, of *corruptio optimi pessima.*

And the preternatural exaltation of the ideal places it so far beyond the reach of the highest attainment in real life that the standard of public duty, lost in the clouds of inflated verbiage, is wholly disconnected from practical affairs. It would, therefore, be quite in vain to seek the key to the politics of the day in Peking in any theory which could be deduced from official utterances, constitutional formulæ, or codes of law. The remark applies, of course, to every government in the world, but the difference is that, whereas in other countries there is still some relation between the profession and the procedure —as, for instance, when the minor is alleged as the major reason—this relation has practically disappeared in China, and the substitution of the false for the true has become an organised system, already consecrated by unwritten law.

We have spoken of the reign of sham in the general administration ; but it has its roots in the Central Government. It may be laid down as a general rule obtaining throughout the public life of the Empire that things are never what they seem. Whether there may or may not be a real patriotic spirit somewhere in China among officials or people, there has been no outward evidence of it in the inner circles of the capital. Instead of defending the Empire and the Dynasty, the natural defenders seem ready to sell both, and it is a problem how far even the Dynasty is true to itself. Each individual among the Ministers of State and the Princes of the Empire seems intent on "saving his own skin" by

making friends of the strongest invader. For many years past the politics of Peking have been swayed by a bitter Palace feud, the young Emperor and his party on one side, and the Empress-Dowager on the other. Of a passionate nature and imperious will, inspired by purely selfish considerations, the late Regent continues to dominate and even to terrorise the Emperor, who is of feeble physique and incapable of wielding the authority which belongs to him. Into this quarrel the courtier Li Hung Chang has been thrust as go-between and factotum for the Empress. His position nearly cost him his head on his return from concluding the humiliating treaty with Japan in 1895, for the Emperor's adherents endeavoured to compass his death first by assassination, and next by quasi-judicial process on the ground of treachery. These designs were frustrated by the countermining of the Empress, who struck sudden terror into the opposite party, and then, to get her *protégé* out of harm's way for a while, manœuvred him into the post of Special Envoy to Moscow in 1896. Quelled for the time, however, the conspirators wait an opportunity to revenge their defeat. Li Hung Chang's fate hangs on the protection of her whom he has served so long and so faithfully. She is aging and exposed to accidents. Naturally, an old campaigner like Li looks out for a second line of defence, and that is Russia. Is it not obvious, then, that we have here a shorter road to the key of recent important transactions than by attempting to balance ordinary reasons of

State, military and political, in order to discover how a government could voluntarily surrender its territory and itself to an invader without an attempt at resistance? Where matters have come to such a pass as that, we may almost as well discuss the machinery of the government of Babylon as that of Peking, so far as the practical interests of the day are concerned. China is like a pear, most rotten at the core.

The woman factor is a potent one in Chinese government, but never in a worthy sense. Historic courtesans become empresses make profitable subjects for literary portraiture and description, but they have usually marked the *débâcle* of a dynasty; and in meaner capacities women have played their part in the intrigues of court and camp. How much the present collapse of China may be due to the personal qualities of the real but illegitimate ruler, the Empress-Dowager, may not be known, but there seems to be no doubt that every surrender made to foreigners since she held the reins was dictated by her and her personal convenience. Remembering her experience when, as the secondary consort of the Emperor Hienfung, she followed him in his flight to Jehol, she resolved rather to yield everything than risk such an experience again. A threat of the invasion of Peking—if believed in—has always been sufficient to bring her to terms. When the present Emperor was prepared to abandon the capital during the Japanese War and resist to the bitter end, it was that imperious lady who insisted on peace at any

price; and it is chiefly on her sensitive feelings that Russian threats take effect, and deprive the Sovereign of the will and the power to resist their demands.

Official and political corruption occupies such a prominent place in most treatises on matters Chinese, that it is commonly regarded as something peculiar to that nation. The peculiarity, however, lies rather in the extent and the organisation than in the nature, or even the form, of the Chinese system of peculation. In substance it is the same which prevails in the Western hemisphere, where it is called "perquisites." That this destructive parasite should have attained a higher development in China than elsewhere may very well be accounted for by the circumstances under which that country itself has developed. The extent of territory and relative difficulty of control, multiplied by the number of centuries during which customs, good and bad, have been growing, would yield a product adequate to account for both the magnitude and the methodisation of Chinese embezzlement.

Though universally condoned, the system is, of course, illegal, and, just as certain forms of malpractice which are winked at in Western countries come, occasionally, into awkward collision with the judges, so officials who have enriched themselves in China continue to be at the mercy of blackmailers. The liability to denunciation and ruin which thus hangs over them goes a long way towards accounting for the universal timidity of Chinese

statesmen. Yet the individual is as much to be pitied as blamed, for against the system which has come down from venerable antiquity it would be as hard to struggle as against one's personal heredity. Fair consideration should be extended to the rank and file implicated in a debasing system which it requires real heroism to resist, for here, as in the midst of a slave-owning society, or in the bondage of vice, there are those who would welcome a way of escape from the necessity of their lives, as well as those who revel in the full current of it.

The root of the matter, no doubt, lies in the fact that Chinese officials are virtually unpaid, their merely nominal salaries being insufficient for their necessary expenses. Hence the official naturally obtains as much gratuitous service as possible, under the tacit understanding that his dependants are to take care of themselves, while, at the same time, he must cast about for the wherewithal to maintain his family and position. From this simple beginning the whole complex system of what we call peculation may be traced.* The younger officials begin life, as a rule, in debt: they have frequently had to pay for their appointments, borrowing for the purpose at usurious interest, and they have to go on paying their official superiors on pain of being reported on. The highest personages in the Empire receive large gratuities from officials gazetted to the

* Meadows assumes the highest mandarins to get by means of "squeeze" about ten times, the lowest about fifty times, the amount of their legal incomes.

provinces, and become rich from that source. And when a term of lucrative service is over, and the governor or prefect is graciously summoned to Court—an honour which he strives to escape, as a rule—it is in order that the sponge which has been absorbing in the provinces may be squeezed in the capital. The cow has been turned into the green corn, destroying more than she has eaten: she must come home to be milked. One highly lucrative post—that of Hoppo, or Collector of Native Customs at Canton—is specially reserved for some worthy connection of the Imperial family, who is expected to amass so much in three years as to be able to deal handsomely by his kinsfolk on his return to the capital. At every seaport there is a collector of Customs, whose emolument is assessed with considerable accuracy by public opinion, ranging from 100,000 to 500,000 taels per annum at some of the more important secondary ports. An official incurs no odium and loses no good name unless his exactions are excessive or lead to public scandal. In the rare case of a veteran being made to publicly disgorge, it is only the computed excess that is dealt with. But, obviously, when such a matter is left to the conscience of the interested party, with no fear of an audit, unless he, from overweening confidence in his influence, is niggardly towards the censors, the door is thrown wide open to the most extravagant abuses. As no official is expected to render a true account, and there is no machinery for checking him that would not itself need, in turn, to be checked,

the sovereign of an oriental country—for China is no exception—would get no revenue at all under a fiduciary system. To meet this case, the revenue collection is simplified by fixed levies—taxes are farmed, monopolies are granted, and thus the most powerful stimulus is supplied to the concessionnaires to raise as large a surplus as possible for themselves. The provinces are assessed in a similar manner for their quota of the Imperial revenue.* The whole arrangement is, of course, clumsy and wasteful in the highest degree. It is beyond our purpose to follow its ramifications, and show in detail how extremely injurious it is to the national interests and how demoralising to the civil service itself. A single illustration will show how the system operates on public affairs. Foreigners who serve the Chinese and have to get money for public purposes are sometimes surprised at the seeming contradictions in the official temper. They will, for example, plead in vain for small outlays for repairs or up-keep of buildings, while the demand

* ". . . Each district has a fixed quota, which the magistrate must produce by hook or by crook, but beyond the minimum all the rest is practically his own, not to keep exactly, because if he holds a lucrative appointment he is expected to be extra liberal in his presents to the Governor, to the Literary Chancellor, to the Provincial Judge, the Treasurer, and so on, not to mention still higher dignitaries, if he wishes to get on. But there is no magistracy that does not at least make up its limits of taxation and leave something over, while the greater number leave a handsome surplus. To hand this over to the Imperial Exchequer is about the last thing that any one would think of doing. It is the fund out of which mainly the fortunes of viceroys and commissioners have been built up."—Jamieson. "Foreign Office Reports," 1897.

for a large sum to erect new ones is granted readily. The reason is that no one is interested in the small expenditure, while the large one affords an opportunity of intercepting a worthy percentage. The lower official recommends the outlay, his superior sanctions it—and they share the profit or commission. The practice is, of course, ruinous in military matters, for it starves the service, while lavishing large sums on heavy guns and ships. Thus the Chinese had at Port Arthur and Talienwan, during the Japanese War, the heaviest fortress guns, enormously costly, the contracts for which made the fortunes of certain officials, but the men trained to use the guns were entirely neglected. The rule is that the Chinese officials will promote that enterprise which will afford them the largest *douceur*, and the possibilities of material progress in China depend chiefly on the operation of that principle. Estimates are sometimes made of the loss of public revenue from wasteful modes of collection, a small percentage only of what is taken from the people being returned to the treasury. Yet it is doubtful whether the pecuniary loss is more ruinous to the country than the destruction, in the governing class, of public spirit, which is the necessary consequence of the wealth of the country being made the subject of a scramble in which every official of the Empire, up to Princes of the Blood, are perpetually engaged. We know, by our own Western experience, how demoralising is a scramble, no matter what the object of it may be.

The two deductions to be made from these premises

are (1) the vital need of thorough reform in the fiscal system of China, and (2) the almost insuperable difficulty of effecting it. From these considerations the importance of the Foreign Inspectorate of Customs will be understood. By this organisation one department, at any rate, of the Imperial revenue has been reduced to order. On the one side, smuggling has diminished, thus saving much friction and loss of time to traders and officials at the treaty ports; and, on the other, all the collections are accounted for to the Government. The only part of the traditional Chinese system that has been perpetuated in the service is the quasi-farming of the expenditure, which affords the Inspector-General a convenient margin for purposes of emergency, political or otherwise. But even this slight concession to Chinese methods keeps the door open to abuses, and, in less scrupulous hands, might easily be worked so as to reproduce some of the very evils which the Customs administration is intended to abolish. The Foreign Inspectorate as it stands, and as it has been developed during forty-four years, is the great object-lesson for Chinese reformers, the working model for the gradual transformation of chaos into order throughout the whole field of revenue and expenditure. As yet the system has only been applied to the trade carried in foreign bottoms generally, and in Chinese steamers. The whole coasting trade in native craft propelled by sails remains within the province of the native Customs, the chiefs of which continue to amass for-

tunes at the treaty ports, alongside the foreign inspectorates which pay salaries and render precise accounts of their collections. The Foreign Customs have supplied the means of securing the foreign indebtedness of China, and, its revenues having now been completely hypothecated to foreign creditors, the pressure of necessity has opened the way to an extension of the inspectorate to other departments of the Chinese revenue system, and the hope of the future of the Empire rests largely on the leavening of the lump by this foreign ferment.

CHAPTER VIII

DIPLOMATIC INTERCOURSE

ALTHOUGH a Minister Plenipotentiary was appointed by Great Britain after the signature of the Treaty of Nanking in 1842, the office was merged in that of Governor of Hongkong, and the diplomatic function remained practically dormant until after the Convention of Peking in 1860, following the Treaty of Tientsin in 1858. In fact, the war of 1856–60 might be said to have been undertaken for the purpose of establishing diplomatic relations with the Central Government. Up to that time there had been no intercourse except at the five ports opened to trade by the Treaty of Nanking. At four of these ports, where the influence of one or two strong men in the newly-established Consular Service had been stamped on the new relations between the Chinese and British authorities, and where a natural development of commerce had taken place, everything was peaceable and prosperous. But at the principal port, Canton, where, most of all, firmness and consistency were needed, these qualities were unfortunately lacking, and the result was that an intolerable state of things was allowed to grow up. Taking full ad-

vantage of the weakness of the British attitude, the Chinese authorities became more and more insolent and aggressive, until at length, in 1856, the cup of their iniquity overflowed, and reprisals had to be undertaken. The right to enter the city, which is the seat of a Governor and Governor-General, had been waived for a term of seven years, in deference to what was represented as the uncontrollable turbulence of the people. At the end of that period the reasons for still further postponing the privilege had, of course, grown stronger, and entry into the city and intercourse with the authorities were still denied to the representatives of Great Britain. Serious troubles had ensued consequent on this anomalous situation. There had been assassinations of Englishmen for which no redress was obtained, insults of every kind accumulated, and the more submissive the foreigners showed themselves the more were they treated as savages and slaves. The whole mercantile community were kept in what was virtually a prison, their peregrinations being confined within the area of what was somewhat euphemistically called a "garden." It was only a question of time as to when this unbearable tyranny must lead to a catastrophe. The spark that ignited the gunpowder was the seizure of the crew of a "lorcha" or schooner belonging to Hongkong and flying the British ensign.

The consul for Canton, Mr. (afterwards Sir Harry) Parkes, happened to be a man possessed of two

great qualities — clear insight and iron resolution. He demanded prompt redress, and received insolent replies. The Chinese authorities did not comprehend the change that was involved in the succession of a strong man, and were for "continuing the treatment," as the doctors say in chronic cases. When the matter was put into the hands of the British Admiral, he limited himself to a single demand, *i.e.*, the treaty right of entering the city and of conferring with the authorities. This being refused with scorn, Sir Michael Seymour made his own way to the yamên of the Viceroy Yeh, but did not find his Excellency at home. Thus began the "war"-like operations which dragged on, with intervals of false peace, until they culminated in the occupation of the Chinese capital. The primary object throughout, or, to use the military phrase, the objective, of the hostilities, which extended over a space of four years (from October 1856 till October 1860) was nothing more nor less than to obtain by direct intercourse with the Peking Court a remedy for the grievances which British subjects and officials had so long and so patiently— pusillanimously would not be too strong a word— endured in the provincial capital, Canton. Further extension of trade as an ulterior object was, of course, never lost sight of by the British statesmen of that time.

The future of British interests in China being thus closely bound up in this sovereign remedy, the inauguration of diplomatic relations acquired a

character of crucial importance. It was by no means a thing "to be taken in hand unadvisedly, lightly or wantonly." It was an incursion into an unsurveyed territory, where the greatest circumspection was called for. The success of the new experiment depended on the skill with which it was carried out, and more especially on the first step, which would give tone and direction to the whole course of future international relations. The conditions under which intercourse was to be conducted were of course unknown; had, in fact, to be evolved by actual experience. The Chinese Court was called upon to break with all its traditions, and to discover a platform on which it could treat foreign nations on terms of equality. This was no light matter; it was a revolution in the most conservative body in the known world. The importance of the demand was felt equally by both negotiants. To the British envoy access to the Imperial Court was the *sine quâ non* of his mission; to the Chinese it was the last ditch, the point on which they could make no surrender. Both sides understood this; and when the Chinese gave way in order to get rid of the British envoy and the naval squadron supporting him at Tientsin, it was only to draw him into an ambush. The Treaty of Tientsin was, from the Chinese point of view, simply a device to gain time in order to bar the way of access against the Minister whom they had covenanted to receive. The temporary success of this expedient was signalised in the British repulse before the Taku forts in 1859. The resistance to

the advent of a British representative was finally overcome, so far as mere force could overcome it, by the Anglo-French campaign of 1860, which resulted in the capture of Peking, causing the flight, followed soon after by the death, of the Emperor Hienfung.

Although, therefore, nothing was known of the machinery or the forms under which the new diplomatic intercourse was to proceed, there was no room for doubt as to the spirit in which the foreign Ministers would be received. As they could not be excluded by material force, they would be neutralised as far as possible by moral expedients. The series of deceptions which the Chinese—not without justification, being the weaker party—had practised on the intruders during successive negotiations, afforded ample proof that the high officers of the Court differed in no way from the high officers in the provinces, of whose manners and customs British officials had had ample experience. The lesson which twenty years had taught was that the Chinese were friendly and reasonable under a firm hand, but insolent and aggressive when met with deference and weakness. It was no new lesson, but simply the teaching of all human experience since history began.

It might have been expected that there would be no repetition, on the new stage of Peking, of the mistaken policy which had been followed for so many years, with such unhappy results, at Canton: that the Ministers who filled the new posts would never forego the advantage which they had derived

from following in the suite of an irresistible military force. The plain fact is, however, that they actually did these very things, and in establishing themselves in the Chinese capital they ignored not only the results of all the experience gained at Canton and the other open ports, and of their own personal experience in the negotiations at which they had assisted, but also that knowledge of the laws of human action which every man of the world possesses. They assumed, and acted as if they believed, that a miracle had suddenly reversed the Chinese character, turning negative to positive, and positive to negative; and to this initial error may be traced thirty-eight years of a policy of hallucination, which has been one of the efficient factors in bringing the Chinese Empire to disruption and British interests there to imminent peril. It is not always easy to isolate the acts of British diplomacy from that of the other Powers; but it is fair to hold British policy responsible, because Great Britain possessed and maintained the lead until a few years ago. Beyond all doubt the false move made, the false direction taken at the beginning, was chiefly due to the British line of action at Peking. Whether it was a kind of remorse for the act of vandalism committed in the destruction of the Chinese art treasures in the Summer Palace, or a peculiar and misdirected sentiment on the part of individuals, the attitude of the British Minister in Peking was more that of the representative of a defeated Power than of a victorious one. For a long time Peking

was treated by him as a sacred place which would be profaned by the intrusion of travellers or visitors, and severe regulations were promulgated for the restraint, under penalty, of inquisitive British subjects. The motive, of course, was unimpeachable, but the idea of obliterating the memory* of the burning and pillage of the Summer Palace, the whole justification and utility of which depended on the memory of it being kept fresh, by punishing an inoffensive tourist for looking at the ruins, was not very practical. Nor were the obsequious efforts to conciliate the Chinese, of which this was but a type, calculated to have any other effect than to inflate them with an already too confident conceit, and to render all rational business with them impracticable. This is the result which was naturally to be expected, and it is precisely what happened, the circle of evil consequences having gone on widening during all the subsequent years. The metropolitan ministers have never, indeed, resorted to the offensive language to which the provincials had become addicted, for the Manchu is

* "The opinion that during the last Anglo-French war with China, the Europeans, and not the Chinese, were the vanquished, is universal throughout the whole of Inner Asia, wherever we travelled. Certainly to the Asiatic mind an enemy who appears beneath the walls of a hostile city and does not destroy it, is no victor, but rather the conquered party. The Chinese Government took advantage of this circumstance to spread the report among their faithful subjects of their victory over the Europeans. Yet they can scarcely have suppressed the knowledge of the destruction of the Emperor's Summer Palace, and that just act of the English chiefs which raised so unreasonable a clamour finds in the circumstances here stated a new justification."—PRJEVALSKI.

by nature a gentleman, but the evasiveness of the Foreign Board has, if possible, exceeded that of the provincial yamêns, while their superior manner of intimating a *non possumus* has been no less exasperating. The urbanity of the Peking Yamên, indeed, has been carried to almost comical excess at times, as when sitting placidly and listening to the objurgations of a foreign Minister driven to despair by their impassiveness, they would help him out with the opprobrious expressions which came with difficulty to his tongue. It is not desirable to concentrate on any one name the blame which should be shared by many, but as the first accredited Minister to China after the war of 1856–60 was one whose prestige was quite exceptional, he had a free hand to shape his course in Peking without the guidance of the Home Government. It is Sir Frederick Bruce, therefore, who is mainly responsible for the truckling policy, and he was the first to feel and deplore its disastrous results. No doubt a Minister, placed as he was, and as any Minister to China is to-day, is largely dependent on his secretaries and sinologues, just as the Home Government is dependent on him; but if he is to elude responsibility by sheltering himself behind a subordinate, it were better to make the secretary Minister, so that the public might have the satisfaction of knowing who is responsible for its affairs.

The lesson of our twenty years' experience was as clear as the day. It was simply that the Chinese

Government should be compelled to fulfil its engagements, not only in the interest of foreigners but in its own. This policy had never failed of success in the hands of British consuls of the stamp of Alcock, Parkes, Medhurst, Alabaster, and one or two others. The yielding policy had always failed, both in the object aimed at and in retaining the friendship of the Chinese officials to whom we yielded. No more favourable conditions could be conceived for impressing and influencing the Government of China than those which existed at the close of the campaign of 1860. They had been routed, the Emperor had fled to Jehol, those who were left to carry on the government were trembling for their heads. They were in the condition of a horse that has been strapped up and thrown by a horsebreaker. Anything could have been done with them. This is testified to by Mr. H. N. Lay, who was present, and in a better position to know than any one else who has yet chosen to utter his opinion. This is what he says:

"When I left China the Emperor's Government, under the pressure of necessity, and with the beneficial terror established by the allied foray to Peking in 1860 fresh in their recollection, was in the best of moods, willing to be guided, thankful for counsel, grateful for help, and in return for that help prepared to do what was right by the foreigner."

And within two years this was the state of things:

"What did I find on my return? The face of things was entirely changed. There was the old insolent demeanour, the

nonsensical language of exclusion, the open mockery of all treaties. . . . In short, all the ground gained by the treaty of 1858 had been frittered away, and we were thrust back into the position we occupied before the war—one of helpless remonstrance and impotent menace, . . . the labour of years lost through egregious mismanagement. The Foreign Board looked upon our European representatives as so many *rois fainéants*. . . . Prince Kung was no longer accessible . . . he professed to be engaged with more important matters."

We have dwelt on the opening of foreign diplomatic intercourse at some length because it constitutes the substratum of subsequent history, including all crises in Chinese affairs; and what follows in this chapter will require constant mental reference to the foregoing remarks, in order to make it intelligible.

The omission to implement the Treaty of Tientsin of 1858 by at once placing a representative in Peking, an omission which caused the naval disaster at Taku in 1859 and necessitated the campaign of 1860, was not repeated in that year. The Minister himself did not remain during the winter, there being no suitable quarters for his accommodation, but a junior official in the Consular Service, Mr. Atkins, was left in charge. The Legations were formally opened in the spring of 1861, Sir Frederick Bruce, younger brother of the Lord Elgin who had negotiated both the treaties, representing Great Britain. In the Chinese government departments no provision existed for the totally unforeseen contingency of receiving foreign representatives otherwise than as tribute-bearers; but the

necessity for doing so having been at last recognised by the Imperial Government, the board or office known as the Tsungli Yamên was established in January 1861, and was ready to transact business on the arrival of the foreign Ministers. It did not take, and never has taken, rank with the Six Boards, and bore at first a tentative character. It has been aptly called a species of Cabinet, composed of members of certain State departments. The head of the institution then, as until the day of his decease, was Prince Kung, the sixth son of the Emperor Taukwang, who was brother of the Emperor Hienfung—then in retirement at Jehol, where he died in October 1861—and uncle of the present reigning monarch. The Prince was from the first a reasonable and sober man of affairs, courteous in manner, whose character inspired hopes of the regeneration of the Chinese State. But probably the member of the Tsungli Yamên who approached nearer to the ideal of a patriot, was serious and intelligent, and had almost more than an ordinary statesman's grasp of affairs and their possibilities, was Wênsiang, between whom and the foreign Legations a greater intimacy sprung up than has ever been possible with any Chinese or Manchu statesman since his death, which occurred in 1875.

The intercourse between this enlightened and patriotic man and the foreign representatives, more especially the British, who in this connection may be held to include the head of the Imperial Maritime or Foreign Customs, was fruitful in an exchange

of views of a highly interesting character, both oral and written, which, if collected, might form the basis of a new political philosophy. Whoever studies the works of Buckle, Spencer, or other writers who endeavour to generalise from world-wide data, is constantly reminded of a great gap in their chain of reasoning, because a fourth of the human race is virtually excluded. Dr. Pearson is an exception to this, but he also fails to master his Chinese data. For the first time a genuine representative of the ethnic consciousness of China, with four thousand years of continuous accumulated history and tradition behind him and a practical problem of extreme exigency in front of him, was brought into sympathetic communion with wise men from the West, bringing in their persons the mellow fruit of their two thousand years of strife and progress; and the result of the contact, if given to the world, could not fail to be highly instructive. But this was unfortunately a mere episode, which led to nothing but disappointment, felt the more deeply on account of the high hopes which had been not unreasonably raised. There was no successor to Wênsiang. The Tsungli Yamên fell into the condition of an ordinary government department, with special vices of its own, an institution for the prevention of business. The numbers of its members, originally three, increased, and varied from seven to nine, but its fatal incapacity lay in the fact that it was a body without a head; for, though there was always a nominal president, he absented himself

when he chose from the daily attendance. The principle of responsibility being carried to such lengths in China as cannot be understood by the mere use of the same word in the West, the vice which detracts so much from efficiency among Western officials, the habit of evading responsibility, is so fully developed there that it seemed as if the new Foreign Board in Peking had no other reason for its existence. The Yamên, until forced into greater activity by the pressure of events resulting from the Japanese War, served merely as the cold water which extinguished the hot irons thrust into it by the ardour of the foreign agents. To transact business with the Board was declared by Sir Harry Parkes to be a physical *tour de force*. Sir R. Alcock more minutely described it in the *Fortnightly Review*, May 1876 :

"It is beating the air to talk to them of treaty rights and obligations, the claims of justice, or the benefits that would accrue to them, as to us, by a more progressive and liberal policy. The tyro in such work is at first charmed with the courtesy and patience shown in listening to what he hopes may prove convincing arguments. They are even met, in reply, with a certain show of appreciative intelligence and willingness to be convinced or better informed. When, however, many such interviews and interminable correspondence in further elucidation have exhausted the subject, and the time has arrived for action or definite result, the disillusion quickly follows. Perhaps at a final meeting for the purpose of settlement, when there is nothing more apparently to be said on either side, his proposal to settle the terms of agreement is met by a request in the blandest accents, and with a perfectly unmoved countenance, to explain what it is that is wanted, as he is ready to hear !—all that passed in weeks of dis-

cussion is as though it had never been. It is simply ignored, and the whole argument, in which days or weeks have been consumed, has to be begun *de novo*, or abandoned as hopeless. What diplomacy can avail against such adversaries?"

And the *modus operandi* was still more minutely depicted by a correspondent of the *Times* in 1884, cited in the "Life of Sir Harry Parkes," by Stanley Lane Poole:

"They commence by the delicate *plaisanterie* of offering refreshments which they know their visitor will not touch, and the attendants know the art of killing time by bringing in the repast, dish by dish, with infinite fuss and ceremony. The visitor sits meanwhile, more or less patiently, on a hard seat in a cheerless room, grimy with venerable dirt, the north wind moaning through the crevices. Fortunately the etiquette of the country permits the hat to be kept on, and necessity compels the visitor to wear a thick ulster with the fur-lined collar turned up to cover the ears, if it be winter. At last, when the melon-seeds and sugar-plums have been distributed in saucers all over the only table on which the foreigner would have liked to spread his papers, business is supposed to commence, half an hour having been happily consumed in arranging sweetmeats. 'And now,' observes the visitor, 'what is your answer about the robbery of merchandise belonging to Mr. Smith at Nam-kwei, and the beating of his servants for refusing to pay the illegal extortions of the officials?' One of their rules is that no one shall speak first. So they take sidelong glances at each other and keep silence until one, bolder than the rest, opens his mouth, as much to the surprise as relief of his comrades, who watch the reckless man in the hope that he will drop something which may serve hereafter to put a sting into some surreptitious charge against him. What he does say is, 'Take some of these walnuts, they come from the prefecture of Long-way, which was celebrated for the excellence of its fruit!' Then follows a discussion on the merits of walnuts, which is, however, not nearly such excellent fooling as Lord Granville's discourse on tea-roses to the gentleman who sought an interview

on some important question connected with China, but it fulfils the same purpose. When they do speak, they all speak at once, and, like Mr. Puff's friends, their unanimity is something wonderful, and their courage rises to heroism. What they do say, can of course be neither understood nor answered; so much the better, since time has been killed, with the arrow of controversy still in the quiver. The Foreign Minister's lips begin to grow pale, and other signs of exhaustion warn the courageous ones that it is time to shout louder if haply they may stun their auditor with their noise."

Obviously, then, the so-called Foreign Office of China was a negative quantity, having neither the faculty of initiation nor appreciation. Its attitude towards foreign ideas was that of a deaf person in regard to sounds or of a blind man in regard to colours. The phenomenon is not so very uncommon even among men of Western race and education, when strange subjects are for the first time expounded. A delusive grammatical comprehension of the phraseology is constantly mistaken for a real intelligence of the matter, which, however often explained, still leaves the auditor, who lacks the necessary faculty, puzzled to know what it is all about. The impossibility of imparting to even highly trained and eagerly receptive minds in the West a conception of the life of the Chinese and of their cogitations on matters of national policy or sociology, might have suggested to foreign Ministers possible mitigating circumstances in judging of Chinese obstructiveness. It was not a simple quantity, but a mixture of mulishness, blankness and dread of personal responsibility. The fact, however, remains

that a stone wall would have been about as effective an instrument of policy as this coterie of Chinese statesmen; and an early recognition of the true state of the case might have saved much gratuitous heart-burning in the first, and more fatalistic callousness in the later incumbents of diplomatic posts. Moreover, a more general recognition of the facts would have saved foreign Governments, the British in particular, from profound misguidance in their Far Eastern policy. These have all, except one, lived on delusions which events of the most drastic character have failed altogether to dispel. In the incompetence and impracticability of the officially appointed medium is to be found the reason, though not the excuse, for trusting to unorthodox substitute channels of communication which have led to no satisfactory results, and in the nature of things could never do so.

Diplomatic intercourse in China opened under a cloud, which exercised a most adverse influence over its early, and by consequence over its whole, development. That was the absence of the Emperor, who had fled before the invading host in 1860 and had not been induced to return to his capital when he died in the autumn of 1861. The Government was in commission, and consequently weak. In one way this fact rendered it pliable, while in another it disposed the foreign representatives to a forbearance which proved fatal to good working relations. There was no sovereign to whom Ministers could deliver their credentials; hence the question of

audience was postponed. Matters were not improved when the Throne became occupied by a child, and the Regents were two women. Neither did the "audience question" improve by keeping; in fact, international relations were stamped with a provisional character during the whole time of the minority. The first audience granted by the Emperor Tungchih was in 1873; it was purely formal, everything being done on the Chinese side to minimise its importance, and its practical effect on business was absolutely *nil.* All the hopes of improved relations which had been based on it proved illusory; there was only the Tsungli Yamên, with the imbecility of age grafted on to the ignorance of youth, as at this day.

There was another cloud which cast a depressing shadow on Chinese affairs, the Taiping rebellion, which from trivial beginnings in 1849 or 1850 had spread havoc over the richest and most populous provinces of the Empire. How near the Dynasty came to be shaken by this movement is only a matter of speculation, but the paralysis of order in the provinces, added to the humiliation of the Emperor by foreigners, formed a combination which was anything but speculative. It was not only the Chinese Government that was paralysed by these calamitous circumstances; the foreign representatives in Peking and their Governments at home found themselves in what may be well called an impossible situation. While they ought to have been pressing and moulding the Central Govern-

ment into the forms which were calculated to ensure good relations in the future, they were as much concerned as the Chinese themselves in checking the ravages of the rebellion, and both directly and indirectly the French and British Governments assisted in the final suppression of the movement. The patient had first to be cured of his disease before being corrected in his manners, but the convalescence was so protracted that the opportunity for correction never came.

An incident in connection with the rebellion, and one which brought into sudden prominence certain features in the new international relationship, deserves a passing notice. That was the commissioning of a steam flotilla manned by British seamen and officered and commanded by British naval officers, known as the Lay-Osborne fleet. The ships were ordered by Prince Kung through Sir Robert, then Mr., Hart, the *locum tenens* of Mr. Lay, the first Inspector-General of Customs, who was in England on leave from 1861 to 1863. The immediate purpose of the fleet was the suppression of the Taiping rebellion by the capture of Nanking and other cities on the banks of the Great River. The ships arrived in command of Captain Sherard Osborne, R.N., but the contracts which Mr. Lay had made with Captain Osborne and the officers under the direct sanction and supervision of the British Government of the day were not ratified by the Chinese, and the force was disbanded and the ships sold, while Mr. Lay decided to resign the Chinese service. It is not necessary to enter

into the merits of this abortive transaction, but it is interesting to note what was the cause of the difference between Prince Kung and Mr. Lay which led to the break-up of the scheme. It was precisely the same kind of misunderstanding which twenty-seven years later, with all our added experience, led to the resignation of Captain Lang from the Chinese service. Mr. Lay had acted on the belief that, as his authority came from Peking, he was organising an Imperial fleet for China; he refused, therefore, to have it placed under the orders of provincial mandarins, and he testified to the sincerity of his convictions by throwing up a promising career rather than sanction the employment of such a military weapon at the pleasure of local officials. Had Mr. Lay not been affected as others also were by the glamour of a central government, he would perhaps have suspected from the first that Prince Kung could not really intend what he said in the sense in which he (Mr. Lay) received the communication. It was a case of words being understood in different senses, not, perhaps, without a secret intention of misleading. But Mr. Lay's misjudgment was venial compared with that of the British officials responsible for the engagement of Captain Lang, whose services were lent, some twenty years later, by the British to the Chinese Government for the special purpose of organising the Chinese Fleet. He was not only placed under the orders of Li Hung Chang, but by him made subordinate to the Chinese Admiral, with whom Captain Lang was induced to believe he was

associated on equal terms. The whole Lay-Osborne incident was promptly disposed of in the summer of 1863, and ceased to disturb the even flow of diplomacy ; and Captain Lang, having found his position untenable, sent in his resignation. That these two separate incidents, involving such important issues connected with naval supremacy in the Far East, should have ended so disastrously, illustrates the strange fatality which has attended our dealings with China.

It is important to observe that the sapping of foreign influence in Peking, through the deferential tactics of the diplomatists there, ran for a number of years parallel with the remarkably clear and strong policy of the British Government at home. From the time when its assertion was rendered necessary by the insults at Canton in 1856 until several years after the final suppression of the rebellion by Gordon, our Government followed a course both in China and Japan which was at once bold and prudent, eminently conducive to the best interests of Great Britain and the civilised world, and to the peace and welfare of the Chinese Empire. The rebellion in China was really put down by Lord Palmerston, for it was in full faith of his loyal support that the British officers on the spot were emboldened to take the decided course which led to such great results as the practical opening of the river Yangtsze to the commerce of the world, the suppression of piracy and all other forms of disorder, and the covering with myriads of white

sails of that vast expanse of water which in 1861 was as desolate as the Arctic Ocean. This resolute and compact policy was most exhilarating to all foreigners engaged in commercial pursuits or mission work in China; not to those of British nationality alone, nor even to foreigners exclusively, but to all Chinese—and there are vast numbers of them—who came within the influence of the British system. It was a wholesome, manly, and inspiring influence, and to the men of that generation it seemed as permanently established as if it were part of the order of nature. They even ceased to be thankful for it, taking it all as a matter of course, like light and air and water. The policy, indeed, was attacked on party grounds, and on grounds which, narrow as they were, went beyond mere party controversy, by Bright and Cobden, who advocated our retirement from the Chinese ports to some peaceful island whence we could conduct our trade, represented by them as of a very petty nature. But the straightforward and business-like expositions of Lord Palmerston, his perfect mastery of the whole question, and his lusty large-heartedness, easily swept away opposition, and the country settled down comfortably in the feeling that, however little it understood of these far-distant affairs, their management was in competent hands. This happy state of things came to an end, and it is sad to have to look back upon so recent a period as a golden age little understood by the generation then living. It is now easy to

see how the mere progress of the world must in any case have brought about changes in the balance of power in the Far East, but it is also not difficult to assign a date when British supremacy there received its death-blow: it was on the 23rd of October 1865, when Lord Palmerston expired. It is true he left behind him that most experienced Foreign Secretary, Lord Clarendon, who was able to indite despatches which cannot even to this day be surpassed for literary finish and absolute correctness of doctrine. But the soul had departed from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as was seen within three short years—as soon, in fact, as Lord Clarendon was confronted with a test; and, with the exception of a very short interval, it has remained absent.

This brings us to another singular phenomenon which appeared in Peking towards the end of 1867. The representative of the United States, Mr. Anson Burlingame, accepted an appointment from the Chinese Government as special Envoy to Western countries, having resigned by telegraph his post as American Minister. He was accompanied by two Chinese officials, who were no doubt really the envoys, Mr. Burlingame being the attendant. His mission was to persuade the governments of the West that China was not in a condition to be pressed, that if left entirely to her own devices she would do everything that was proper. In particular, he inveighed, with the turgid eloquence of which he was a master, against any coercion being resorted

to for the redress of injuries in the provinces, "the throat policy," as he termed this process. He also made extensive promises on behalf of China, with one eye directed towards the mercantile and the other towards the missionary sentiment of the English-speaking nations. "The Shining Cross," in his glowing phraseology, was to be planted on every hill and valley throughout China. It so happened, however, that while Mr. Burlingame was on tour outrages on missionaries and on merchants in widely separated portions of China had been adequately and effectively redressed after a very slight display of force, following, but by a long interval, the vigorous action which had proved so salutary in Shanghai two decades earlier. Lord Clarendon, apparently without consulting his own paid and responsible agents in China, seemed to accept Mr. Burlingame's inspiration without a grain of salt, and addressed severe reprimands to certain consuls, who, in the opinion of all foreign residents in China, had rendered valuable services to humanity while defending the immunities of British subjects. It was the first public pronouncement of the death of the Palmerstonian tradition, and of the relapse of Great Britain into an effeminate, invertebrate, inconsequent policy, swayed by every wind from without or within, and opposed to the judgment of her own experienced representatives—the policy which has beyond doubt led to the decline of British prestige in Asia. The genesis of the Burlingame mission is somewhat obscure, its precise object scarcely less

so; but its putative parents and actual sponsors are believed to have deprecated its consequences as having gone far beyond what was hoped or intended when it was despatched.

The new departure of the British Government in 1869 was received with consternation by the foreign communities in China. Instructions were sent out forbidding her Majesty's ships to land their men under any circumstances, except to take the British residents on shipboard when they were threatened with danger. The dismay of the residents was tempered with mirth provoked by the impracticable nature of the new order, which was scarcely less absurd than would be one to embark the population of Brighton on board a couple of Channel steamers. The alarming feature in the case—for there was no officer in the British Navy who would have carried out the instructions—was the ignorance displayed by the British Government of the actual conditions of life in China, ignorance which would have been impossible in the lifetime of Lord Palmerston, who was never at fault in his appreciation of the common facts of the Chinese question. That the same inacquaintance with facts has prevailed till now there is reason to believe, notwithstanding a succession of highly-paid representatives in China, with an extensive and capable staff of consuls, all possessing a knowledge of the language. Once our Government entered on the course of taking its information from every source but the legitimate one, it necessarily landed itself in a perpetual fog,

in which it became more and more dependent on such information as might be volunteered from extraneous and not always disinterested sources.

From what has been said it may be inferred that diplomatic intercourse in Peking has always been of a hidebound character. There was never any give-and-take in it, because such a thing as equality of standing could not enter into the conception of the Chinese Ministers, and they could not in their hearts either extend fair treatment to foreigners or expect such at their hands. Hence the attitude of the Chinese has been mere resistance tempered by fear. For some years indeed, with a few exceptions, until the Audience deliberations of 1891, the diplomatic body acted together; and had they always done so their will would have been irresistible. But their unity could never carry them very far: in the nature of things their interests began to differ, and their policy still more. Then the Chinese saw their opportunity of pitting one Power against the other, and of profiting, in their shortsighted manner, by the mutual jealousies, not always of the Powers themselves, but of their local representatives. These divisions in the aims and policy of the foreign Powers, which began to show themselves as cracks and fissures not very perceptible from a distance, have now widened into yawning chasms. For many years, too, the Chinese Ministers were naturally accustomed to rely, especially in their controversies with Great Britain, on the advice and mediation of their own paid servant,

the Inspector-General of Customs, who has often succeeded in blunting, if not breaking, the weapon levelled against his principals. The touchstone of all discussions has been force; and the Chinese have remained true to the character which the late Lord Elgin gave them, of "yielding nothing to reason but everything to fear." The same testimony has been borne by his successors in the representation of Great Britain in Peking. Accordingly, whenever a question reached the point of urgency, they would simply ask their referee, "Does it mean war?" If the answer was Yes, they would instantly yield, and if No, they refused to give way. Had foreign Powers understood the true state of the case—and it was often enough explained to them by their agents—their diplomacy might have been greatly simplified. Anything could have been obtained at any time during the past thirty-seven years, just as we see anything can be obtained to-day, by threats in which the Chinese Government believes; for there had been a settled determination during the whole of that period that under no circumstances would the Court risk an invasion. Japan might have had all she wanted in Korea without firing a shot had she been so disposed, but, wishing to gratify the military party, the opportunity of refusing an ultimatum was not even granted to China. The nearest approach to a threat of war was when, failing to obtain redress for the murder of Margary on the Burmo-Chinese frontier, Sir Thomas Wade left Peking. He was promptly followed to Chifu by Li Hung

Chang, and a settlement was come to. It was a settlement injurious to the interests of Great Britain, the state of affairs in Europe in 1876 operating greatly in favour of the Chinese negotiator, for, though the British Minister was supported by a naval demonstration, his antagonist had private information that no coercive action would be taken. It was purely a question of force, nevertheless, and but for the natural reluctance of Li Hung Chang to return empty-handed to Peking, and the desire on both sides to put an end to a troublesome controversy, no treaty at all might have been concluded at Chifu.

The unreasoning resistance of the Chinese was never, of course, so absolute but that some impression could be made upon it by foreign Ministers who combined ability with perseverance. There have been one or two such personalities among the various legations, and some who inspired the Chinese Government with confidence. General Vlangali, who represented Russia in the seventies, was more than once appealed to in after years, when he was in office in St. Petersburg, by Li Hung Chang, as man to man, and he never uttered an uncertain sound. Herr von Brandt, who represented Germany for an unusually lengthy period, gained great influence with the members of the Tsungli Yamên, and was one of the few who was able to cultivate personal relations with some of those highest in rank, who visited him privately at his residence. It has always been one of the

obstacles in the way of a good understanding that private intercourse was barred by custom and etiquette, and that all conversations and negotiations had to be carried on with a group, each member more concerned to make the approved pose before his own jealous colleagues than to clear up the business in hand. Even in returning official calls, the Chinese Ministers were accustomed to hunt in couples, like sisters of charity collecting subscriptions; hence it was an important step to get in touch with a single individual, a thing not unknown in the provinces, but virtually proscribed in the metropolis. Some of the most important of the recent concessions, the foundation of all that have followed, were extorted from Prince Kung, who was induced, against his own wish, to accept the hospitality of the Russian legation, where he passed an evening between Count Cassini and M. Gérard,—with tragic consequences for China.

It was only by, so to say, capturing a single responsible Minister, and withdrawing him entirely from his colleagues, that anything like secrecy could be secured for any negotiation. Business transacted at the Tsungli Yamên might almost as well be conducted in the market-place, and the foreign Ministers who take the trouble are able to inform themselves accurately and promptly of all that passes between Chinese and foreign diplomatists. They are not all equally well served in this matter, mainly because they are not equally liberal in the use of means. Russia takes first rank with her Intelli-

gence Department, and employs the most infallible methods. The "travelling rouble" works marvels. Most Chinese officials of any utility are in the pay of Russia, the amount being graduated according to rank and circumstances. The very man sent to St. Petersburg in March 1898 to make an appeal to the Tsar on behalf of Port Arthur is a stipendiary of Russia in his capacity of sinecure director of the Russo-Chinese Bank. To those who know anything of the *modus operandi* in Peking, the idea that a British newspaper correspondent there could ever transmit a piece of important news not known in the Russian legation is altogether absurd.

Of course, since the Japanese War, which ceased in 1895, there has been less and less diplomacy, and more and more force, applied to the Government of China. As was said by a Russian official, "it is not a question what China will grant, but what foreigners will take"—a question of force, and that alone. The progress of the Audience question is only another illustration of the same thing. Most reluctantly, and by the slowest steps, have the doors of the Imperial Palace been opened to the foreign representatives; points of ceremony have been yielded with rigid parsimony, beginning with the function of 1873, suspended, during the long minority of the present Emperor, until 1891; and now, after the harshest possible treatment by the "mailed fist" of Germany, the full honours have been for the first time accorded to Prince Henry of Prussia.

CHAPTER IX

THE NATIVE PRESS

In the state of ferment into which the Chinese nation has been thrown by the pressure of recent events it is reasonable to expect that new social forces will come into play, while old ones may assume a new development. The future is therefore full of interest, and there may be many surprises in store for us in the process of adjustment to new conditions on which China has now entered. Among the factors in the new evolution none deserves more attention than the Chinese Press, which, though only in its infancy as yet, has shown such signs of vitality that its influence on the course of events in the Empire must henceforth be taken seriously into account.

Although of Western origin, for the most part owned by foreigners, and printed with foreign appliances, there is no civilised institution that has so really commended itself to the non-official classes of the Empire as the modern daily paper. The Chinese *Peking Gazette*, however, is the oldest newspaper in the world, compared with whose hoary age the *Times* with its hundred summers is but of yesterday. This *doyen* of newspapers began and is still carried

on with the special object of supplying the people with news regarding the acts of the Government. More valuable illustrations of political and social institutions may be gathered, as Sir Rutherford Alcock contended, and a clearer insight may be obtained of the actual working of the governing machinery, by a careful study of the *Peking Gazette* than from any other source. And the glimpses it affords into Chinese life, manners, and customs make it singularly valuable as a guide to further inquiry.

"If the visitor at Peking," says Sir Rutherford, "extend his researches into the Chinese city, and even penetrate into one of the narrow side streets near *Lieu-li-chang*, the Paternoster Row of the capital, he may pass the door of one of the offices whence the printed copies are issued. This is the quarter of booksellers, and their associate instruments, bookbinders and wood-engravers. On entering the shop, cases of wooden cut characters may be seen ranged against the wall, and sorted according to the number of strokes in each. Some of frequent occurrence together are arranged as double characters, such as 'Imperial edict,' mandarin titles, the official title of the reign, &c. About a dozen of these printing-offices suffice to issue several thousand copies, from whence they are distributed, as in London, to their customers, or despatched in batches to the different provinces. But these offices are all private, and trust to the sale of copies for their reimbursement and profits. For six dollars a year the Pekingese may keep himself posted up in all that the Government thinks it desirable he should know as to its acts, or the course of events in the provinces. Or he may hire his *Gazette* for the day, and return it if he does not approve of the cost of purchasing." *

Although in origin and aim somewhat similar to our own newspaper, in one respect there is a vast difference: never was there need in China for men like

* *Fraser's Magazine*, 1873.

Dr. Johnson to listen to debates in Parliament and carry them home in their retentive memories to be furbished up, for the Government itself orders copies of Imperial decrees, rescripts, and papers that have been presented before the Imperial Council to be placarded upon boards every morning, for the information of the people. These papers are permitted to be printed and circulated, but without comment, and, as was to be expected, constituted, before the advent of the regular newspaper, the staple news and almost only subject of discussion amongst literary men throughout the Empire, the veto against written criticism doubtless giving all the greater zest to criticism by the living voice.

One would have thought that the next step would be the general newspaper; but, as in the case of several of the arts and inventions, the Chinese seem to have been suddenly arrested on the threshold of a great discovery and forced to bide their time until circumstances bade them take a fresh departure. There has, however, always been in the hands of the people, through the anonymous proclamation and placard, an effective instrument by which popular wrongs were ventilated and the objects of popular hatred denounced. During times like those of the Franco-Chinese and Japanese Wars squibs and pasquinades written with endless satiric force and fun were freely passed from one to another; and illegal placards, in which official corruption and incapability are exposed to the indignant people, are found on

many a blank wall. There is no doubt that the burning and looting of Shameen by the Canton rowdies, the anti-Christian riots in Hunan instigated by Chou Han, and the destruction of chapels, Catholic and Protestant, in various parts of the country, were caused by those potent though irresponsible appeals. Their publication is evidence of a greatly excited state of popular feeling, and to ignore their power in Chinese politics would be a profound mistake. A single placard has been known to suddenly change the attitude of a whole district towards foreigners.

"When it is desired," Huc says, "to criticise a Government, to call a mandarin to order, and show him that the people are discontented with him, the placards are lively, satirical, cutting, and full of sharp and witty sallies: the Roman pasquinade was not to be compared to them. They are posted in all the streets, and especially on the doors of the tribunal where the mandarin lives who is to be held up to public malediction. Crowds assemble round them, they are read aloud in a declamatory tone, whilst a thousand comments, more pitiless and severe than the text, are poured forth on all sides, amid shouts of laughter. 'We Chinese,' they say, 'print whatever we like—books, pamphlets, circulars, and placards—without any interference from Government. We may even print for ourselves, at discretion, provided we do not find it too troublesome, and have money enough to get the types carved.'"

As it was a combination of historical and other circumstances that led to the successful adoption of the discovery of Gutenberg or Faust in the West, so in Far Cathay the native newspaper is the outcome and legitimate result of foreign intercourse, and of the moral pressure exerted, often uncon-

sciously, by consular agents, merchants and missionaries who have resided along the coast since the time of the Treaty of Nanking. Without this pressure, and without the mechanical appliances of the foreigner, the native Press would not have come into existence. One difficulty in its way was the Chinese method of printing from wooden blocks, employed as early as A.D. 581. This was practically surmounted by the East India Company, which defrayed the cost of casting successfully a fount of movable metallic type, in the year 1815, for the use of their factory at Macao, but more particularly for the printing of Dr. Morrison's invaluable dictionaries, and other works bearing on Chinese subjects. This fount was destroyed by fire in 1856. It is said that movable metallic types were made in China and Japan centuries ago—as far back as A.D. 1040, but they were *articles de luxe*, not intended for popular use. The cost of casting founts of movable Chinese type prevented the more extended use of what has since proved to be a success. The task of providing cheap type was reserved for another class of men. The more enlightened missionary bodies being fully alive to the fact that most of the grosser superstitions of the Chinese were due to ignorance, to an incorrect apprehension of "natural truth," began, soon after their settlement in China, to issue works of useful knowledge; but as the cutting of blocks and printing from them was both costly and tedious, not to mention other inconveniences connected therewith, means had to be devised to print from

metallic type; and the result is that, through the enterprise of British and American missionaries, elegant founts of type of every description are produced by electrotype and other processes with ease and cheapness, in every way suitable for the purpose of a daily newspaper.

As, however, every governor in his province, indeed every prefect in his department, is almost an independent satrap, invested with vast powers to crush any attempt at independent criticism of the acts of the Imperial or the local Government—for such a proceeding is against the letter though not the spirit of Chinese law and institutions—some position was necessary from which papers could be published with safety; near enough to be sent into the Empire, but yet beyond the jurisdiction of its officers.* Such a position was found in our colonies of Hongkong and the Straits Settlements, and in the foreign concessions at Shanghai; the fact, too, that the papers were in many cases owned by foreign capitalists being an additional element of security.

Such are the successive steps that have accompanied the establishment of a native Press, in our sense of the term. As has already been said, the

* In discussing the native Press in China, Mr. Curzon says, in his "Problems of the Far East": "The absence of party politics in China is itself a discouragement to the existence of an organised Press. On the other hand, the absence of such a Press is a welcome preventive to the dissemination of novel or revolutionary ideas, or to the spread of any propaganda at which the Government would look askance."

newspaper, from the first, commended itself to the people, conservative though they are in education and character, and has become one of the necessaries of life to every intelligent and thoughtful native at the treaty ports and provincial yamêns, but especially at Rangoon, Singapore, and Saigon, and in California, Peru, Australia, Cuba, Mauritius—in fact, wherever Chinamen do congregate.

The issue of the first independent Chinese newspaper, while it heralded the dawn of a brighter day for the whole Chinese people, held out hopes especially for one class, which individually, though not collectively, has always deserved our sympathy—the disappointed "scholars of fortune." These men collectively constitute the *literati*, a class that wields enormous power in virtue of the deference spontaneously accorded to letters, and of its being socially at the head of the four classes—namely, scholars, farmers, artisans, and merchants—into which the population of the Empire is divided. Impecunious though they generally are, they are still able to wield with effect the power thus placed in their hands—a power that has been likened, and with some truth, to the influence exerted by the squirearchy and country clergy in Britain before Reform Acts disturbed the repose of rural parishes. When all the possibilities of the newspaper Press dawn upon the minds of this hungry horde of educated paupers, this poverty-stricken, restless, intellectual class, who is there dare venture to foretell

the results upon an active and inquisitive race like the Chinese? It seems likely that the story of the Japanese native Press will be again repeated, but with a power in direct ratio to the vastly greater forces that are sure to be exerted in China. It will be remembered that after the abolition of the feudal system in Japan thousands of the lieutenants and retainers of the Daimios, the very flower of the intellect, the pick of the prowess of the country, unable to procure employment under the altered conditions violently introduced by the new system, found themselves homeless and helpless. They could not dig, to beg they were ashamed. The native Press, brought into existence with the Restoration, was a God-sent gift to such men. Old Samurai of bluest blood, who had lived lives of lettered ease in feudal castles, wielded the pen in the editor's sanctum; and swordsmen, who had made stand with their lord for Mikado or Shogun, now stood at the composing-case and printing-press, admitting and permitting no loss of dignity, conscious that they were working, as of yore, for the glory and advancement of Dai Nippon. It was a wonderful revolution, of which only some of the results are as yet apparent. So may it be in the slow but certain revolution which the forces of modern civilisation are effecting in China, though the results may be very different.

The number of literary men, graduates, aspirants for office, who, out at elbow, throng every city and village—some years ago there were at Lanchau, in

Kansu, nearly a thousand such "expectants"—will, it is to be hoped, find in journalism something more useful, more honourable and more conducive to self-respect than writing odes on fans or composing scrolls for some native Mæcenas. And as, while waiting for office, they constitute the unrecognised Opposition, and by far the ablest critics of those in office, the newspapers will afford them an opening for their talents and energies and an unfailing means of criticising measures before they have been confirmed for good or evil and have passed beyond recall. Such action is quite in harmony with existing Chinese institutions, and is merely a popular extension of what has obtained in China for ages. And here the mind recurs not merely to Confucius and Mencius, who are nothing if not political critics, but to the College of Censors, their legitimate descendants, from whose animadversions the Emperor himself is not free. It may be expected that a growing public opinion will hedge in these journalists with privileges, as the Government have fully recognised the prerogatives of the Censorate; but only so long as literary ability is applied to public and moral ends, and to the support and reform of existing institutions, will it find countenance. The time for liberal ideas and the spontaneous adoption of other reforms of government, on Western or republican lines, is yet to come. If China had only been permitted to work out her salvation in her own way, under the tutelage of the free English-speaking races, she might, in the course of time, have adopted as much

of our systems as could be incorporated into her own without obliterating her individuality.

It has been my endeavour to indicate the possibilities open to newspaper enterprise in the vast field of China as soon as the people may be able to override the high-handed proceedings of the mandarins, and to insist that this growth of freedom should be directly grafted on a plant grown on Chinese soil. That a Chinese Press would, if altogether left to itself, be moral in tone and endeavour to elevate the people, might be assumed from the almost unsullied purity of Chinese classic literature from the days of Confucius to the present time; but the street literature, it must be confessed, hardly justifies this assumption. The influence of the *literati* and, particularly, the attitude of the Censorate have been alluded to elsewhere, and the episode there cited, that between the celebrated Censor Sung and the Emperor Kiaking, shows that even censors may be bold, and at the risk of life, and that outspoken criticism will always exist.

Apart from local intelligence, advertisements and other items, we may divide the contents of native papers into four chief divisions: articles on purely Chinese affairs; leaders on international relations, and, if there be a war on hand, of course also war news; translations from the foreign Press; and *précis* from the Peking and provincial *Gazettes*. Considered as a whole, they are truly strange amalgams of ancient political and philosophical maxims and curiously distorted statements of

modern facts, reflecting closely indeed the Chinese method of dealing with matters,—accepting words for facts, the shadow for the substance.

It is, however, in criticism of purely native affairs that the Chinese journalist is at his best, that his previous training tells, that he is on solid ground. As his readers, like himself, have read the very same books, in the very same order, elucidated by the very same orthodox commentators, the writer can easily sway their minds by reference to the well-known but never worn-out principles laid down by the Sages, according to which kings reign and princes decree justice. He appeals frequently, indeed almost in every passage, to the teachings of history, stimulating his readers' feelings by calling to witness their long line of ancestors who have distinguished themselves in a not inglorious past.

From a literary point of view these articles are the most valuable, as they are the most difficult, part of the paper. The *simplex munditiis*, the simple elegance of the classics, is the point aimed at. The theme of an able Chinese literary man, by means of the monosyllabic form of the language and its ideographic writing, acquires a concentrated energy exceedingly difficult to describe, indeed impossible to convey to the Western mind, appealing as it does to the eye, the ear and the intellect. Chinese prose style sparkles with epigram, antitheses and the other figures of speech depending on brevity for their force. It abounds with *curiosa felicitas;* and nothing delights writer and reader more than

the suggested quotation aptly hidden in the text, just apparent enough to give a delicate archaic aroma to the period. As Mr. Stewart Lockhart states in his "Manual of Chinese Quotations:"

"One of the chief characteristics of the written language of China is its love of quotation. The more frequently and aptly a Chinese writer employs literary allusions, the more is his style admired. Among the Chinese it might almost be said that style is quotation. With them to quote is one of the first canons of literary art, and a Chinese who cannot introduce even into his ordinary compositions phrases borrowed from the records of the past might as well try to lay claim to literary attainments as a European unable to spell correctly or to write grammatically. Letters on the most common subjects, and newspaper paragraphs detailing ordinary items of intelligence, are seldom written without the introduction of quotations, and, if these quotations are not understood, it is impossible to grasp the meaning of the writer."

And what have been the practical results of all the newspaper criticism of the officials? At first the mandarins by no means liked this outspoken expression of opinion, and it took them rather by surprise to find their acts, hitherto above open criticism, subjected to hostile comment. The newspaper, much to the chagrin of the hangers-on about the yamên, was at first forbidden; but when the great man learnt that his brother prefect in the adjacent department was also coming in for a share of the lash, under which he himself had been writhing, curiosity and the appreciation of the misfortune of one's friends got the better of dignity, and the paper was restored—and there it still remains.

The history of the *Shên Pao*, or the *Shanghai*

Gazette, started in 1870, is instructive. This, the leading native paper in China, has distinguished itself in successfully exposing official abuse. It has spoken out manfully against torture, no matter by whom inflicted, whether by high-placed mandarin or underling of low degree ; and, more than this, it has succeeded in securing the reversal of unjust decrees of provincial governors by the supreme authorities at Peking, in spite of the etiquette and dilatoriness of Chinese law, and, above all, of the obstructiveness at the capital of the friends of the officers attacked, for every official has his band of friends—they are necessary to his existence. In another direction it did excellent work in encouraging liberality, by publishing the names of the donors to relief funds, as, for instance, when the famine ravaged the provinces of Chihli and Shantung, and on other similar occasions. During the twenty-six years of its existence it has shown the way to many reforms, and by means of its ability and independence has acquired a comparatively large circulation, attaining to a position of real influence unequalled by any other native paper.

It has not, however, been all plain sailing with the *Shên Pao*. Many attempts have been made to suppress or ruin it by subsidising official rivals, but in vain. A special effort was made by the Governor of the Chekiang Province, who had been attacked in the paper for being involved in a disgraceful case of judicial murder. He appealed to Prince Kung, then head of the Tsungli Yamên,

to suppress it. The Prince's reply was a snub to the Governor and a vindication of the *raison d'être* of the paper. He intimated that it was rather a ticklish thing for him to deal with a foreign-owned concern published in a foreign settlement; and pertinently added, "We rather like to read it in Peking." It is an open secret, too, that in the recesses of the Forbidden Palace the Empress Regent, than whom few abler women exist, and the higher Court functionaries partake of this "forbidden fruit" from the tree of knowledge.

The native papers in Hongkong have been exerting a similar though a far inferior influence in south China. The *Tsun-Wan Yat-Po* or *Universal Circulating Herald*, while under the editorship of the Chinese "teacher" of Dr. Legge, late Professor of Chinese at Oxford, was remarkable for the emphatic and almost savage way in which it attacked official abuse and misconduct.

Reform is steadily making its way by means of the Press, directed by the right class, the younger educated men. When the Reform Club was closed at Peking in the winter of 1895–6 the spirit of reform, which exists in China as elsewhere, had not been killed, as was assumed; it had merely been scotched. Suppressed at Peking, the leaders moved their headquarters to Shanghai, where an active propaganda is conducted, chiefly by means of a magazine entitled *Chinese Progress*. Until recently published every ten days, this journal is about to

become a daily paper. It commands a large staff of writers, and is supported by some three hundred students and eighty benevolent societies pledged to support the reform movement. Nor is this support merely from the younger and non-official classes; even viceroys and lesser officials subsidise the society by subscriptions and letters of recommendation, not always, it is true, without some ulterior motive, for there is such a thing, or will be, as "capturing" the Press in China. The tiny paper of earlier days, with its four narrow pages, has already grown into thirty broad leaves, with a circulation of ten thousand throughout the provinces, as against the former edition of one thousand chiefly sold at the capital. Besides *Chinese Progress*, there are in Shanghai alone no fewer than twenty secular magazines and papers, while before the Chino-Japanese War there were only four. The reform movement has four branch centres, in Macao, Hunan, Szechuan and Kiangsi.

In their treatment of international questions and of matters connected with the Franco-Chinese and Japanese Wars, the writers of native papers are seen at their worst. Here it is that their insufferable literary conceit, which begets in them a contempt for everything outside their own literature, stands in the way of progress. Refusing to recognise the altered conditions around them, and shutting their eyes to what has been actually accomplished within their own borders, many of them continue to treat any matter in which foreign interests are concerned as if no foreigner had permanently

settled along their coast-line—as if China, secure in its isolation, were still the suzerain of all the many lands once hers. Incredible as it may seem, the British colony of Hongkong, even in 1898, is still marked in many Chinese maps as part of the Empire of China!

In the Franco-Chinese campaign of 1884 the French were considered merely "outside intruders" or filibusters egging on traitorous Tongkingese vassals to rebellion, and in the Chino-Japanese War the Japanese were the "little dwarfs" attacking the Chinese "Goliath," and were to be driven into the sea at one fell swoop of the Chinese army. The British are still commonly known as "the red-furred devils," while Europeans generally are termed *Kuei Tsze*, "devils."

The military tactics recommended to Chinese generals are to this day abstracted from works of a thousand years ago—while archers were still effective soldiers — when not borrowed from the altogether impossible "stratagems" (on a par with the Trojan horse) of the heroes of the remotest antiquity. The attitude of the Chinese Press in time of war is one of uncompromising chauvinism, which neither disaster nor incapacity seems to modify. It may be merely an easy method of earning a reputation for patriotism, or it may arise from a desire to "save face"—that universal trait of the Chinese character, at all times and under all circumstances—but probably there is a complexity of causes to account for it. How was

the Franco-Chinese war fever kept alive? Both newspapers and officials concealed the truth and pandered to the popular taste. They described battles—always a pet subject with literary men in China, as elsewhere—that had never been fought; they sang pæans of congratulation over victories that were never won; and illustrations of the audacious "barbarians" being driven back pell-mell at the point of the Chinese trident were widely circulated among eager purchasers. They raised enough fervour of patriotic enthusiasm to make it dangerous for a Chinaman to even hint at the possibility of victory being on the other side. The populace were unanimous in allowing themselves to be fooled,—they seemed to like the process. At the suggestion of the Press, in 1884 a patriotic fund was established to be subscribed to by Chinese emigrants over-sea. Large sums were at once raised from men who had already contributed to war expenses through the representatives of their clans in the villages of their own country. From Cuba and Peru and elsewhere contributions came pouring in from those who were the survivals of the fittest of the nefarious and despised "coolie trade."* The rich "companies" of San Francisco also subscribed most liberally for the defence of the Canton Province. The editors were not slow in driving home the lesson. "These men," wrote one, "have encountered the wind and waves for thousands of *li* to earn a living in a foreign land. Yet when they hear that their country is involved in

* See chapter xii.

war, intolerant of delay, they at once raised a subscription to aid the Government and assist the revenue. Alas! when men living outside the border-line act in this way, what should we do that live within the country itself? We respectfully write this appeal, urging all public-spirited men to go and do likewise." "I should add that there is no deception," continues the writer, "as to the amounts, as the list of donors is published, and the committee of management are all honourable men." Not only did the editors do their best in sober prose to stir up the war feeling, but the aid of song was also invoked, one of the poets being no less a personage than a commander-in-chief.

In international questions the Chinese editor relies on the sentiments of foreign papers. Articles on contraband, blockades, duties of neutrals, and so forth, can all, as a rule, be traced to a foreign source. The opinions of the *Times* during the Franco-Chinese and Chino-Japanese Wars were well known, and were referred to with respect, our newspapers generally being alluded to as "Western friend,"—the equivalent of "our contemporary." It is in the department of the paper dealing with foreign matters that grave mistakes are made, mainly through the sheer ignorance of the translators, who are too often incompetent for their posts. Except the *Shên Pao*, and one or two other papers which have a foreigner to advise on all foreign questions, the translations on which the editor bases his "leaders" are made, for the

most part, by English-speaking Chinese who have never been out of China. Their ideas of things foreign are inaccurate, but not quite so inaccurate, perhaps, as many of our ideas regarding matters Chinese. The newspaper translator handles the most abstruse and delicate subjects, those requiring special knowledge, with the utmost assurance, and as he sees most things through the spectacles of his own prejudice, the accuracy and value of the translation may be estimated. The less conceited carefully omit difficulties altogether and confine themselves to what is plain sailing.

Some of the high officials are fully aware of the unreliability of native newspaper accounts of foreign affairs, and have engaged more competent translators to give them the news direct from the English Press. On the whole, there is some improvement in the native Press; and, as the Chinese now know that there is money to be made through a successful newspaper, it may be anticipated that ere long, when communications open the country, the better-class papers will engage foreigners to advise on foreign affairs. Telegraphic information is "conveyed" from their "Western friends," though not infrequently Chinese versions of foreign affairs are written by secretaries or hangers-on of the yamêns, who increase their scanty pay by forwarding their rendering of some telegram to the papers in Shanghai or Hongkong.

Along the upper border of the newspapers, where in the West is placed the title and date, is written

the exhortation, "Please respect written paper, the merit is boundless"—an exhortation always heeded, for papers are carefully filed in shop and office, and are read and re-read until at last they almost fall to pieces. Then comes the man from the society that makes written paper its special care—for there is in China a society for this, as for everything else under the sun—and takes away the well-thumbed printed rags and tatters, to be reverently burnt in a crematorium attached to the *Wen Miao*, the Literary Temple. These usages are mentioned as instances of the delicate regard of the Chinese for their sacred letters. The native news-sheet, though printed on paper with foreign appliances, already receives a welcome wherever it goes in China.

What will be the evolution of the native Press in China it would be rash to prophesy. It may yet rouse a nation which has been too long under the spell of the dead hand and the dead brain; may teach it to break away, not from the characteristics stamped on them by nature and environment, but from the benumbing conservatism which has succeeded so long in preventing the progress of liberalism; may teach the people to understand that there is an intellectual and moral life more active and more restless than their own; may teach the most literary nation in the whole world—too long spell bound by past great names and great reputations—to at last think for itself. And when such a nation once begins to think——!

CHAPTER X

THE CHINESE PEOPLE

The manners and customs of the Chinese, and their social characteristics, have employed many pens and many tongues, and will continue to furnish an inexhaustible field for students of sociology, of religion, of philosophy, of civilisation, for centuries to come. Such studies, however, scarcely touch the province of the practical, at least as yet, for one principal reason—that the subject is so vast, the data are so infinite, as to overwhelm the student rather than assist him to sound generalisations. Writers on this theme may be classified more easily than the subjects on which they write. Two groups at least are sufficiently distinct to admit of being labelled: the censorious and the picturesque. Both approach Chinese portraiture with a bias which distorts their pictures. The one set go up and down among this great people with a Diogenes lantern, and fail to find any good thing in them. They are weighed in the balance against other nations, notably the Japanese, and are found wanting.* Their virtues are vices,

* "The sickly praises lavished by passing travellers upon Japan and her fitful civilisations; the odious comparisons drawn by superficial observers to the disparagement of China, of her slowly-

their customs odious, their religions abomination, and all their practices brand them as a lost race. These catalogues of vileness recall a class of advertisements now very common, which from a tale of unutterable woe lead up to a sovereign remedy.

The second class of writers seek, legitimately enough for their own purpose, to catch the excrescences of Chinese life, with a view to caricature, and through their exertions the European public is possessed of a series of impressions which, though true in themselves, are out of setting, and, for want of a natural background, constitute distorted pictures. A few philosophical observers like Sir John Davis and Taylor Meadows address serious readers, but are little known, though they are most authentic. The Abbé Huc touched with an artist's pen the dry bones and made them live. Dr. Williamson has left us many sound and practical observations. But the reading public of our day are chiefly indebted to the two American missionary writers, Justus Doolittle and Arthur H. Smith, for the most laudable attempts to cover the whole range of Chinese life, the one relating with great circumstantiality of detail the social customs of the Chinese, and the other their moral and mental characteristics. That these two conscientious writers have done their best to repress natural prejudices cannot be doubted; and that one of them has succeeded, at least in his second edition,

changing institutions, and of her massive national characteristics; the seare gall and wormwood to all who know under whose tuition it was that Japan first learned to read, to write, and to think."—*Gems of Chinese Literature*, by Herbert A. Giles.

may be readily admitted, which is the more creditable since it is obvious that the very *raison d'être* of the Christian missionary would be gone if the Chinese were acknowledged to be a nation of exemplary livers; for they that are whole need not the physician. One may specially commend Mr. Smith as at once terse and fascinating, calm and cultured: his modest volume* bears the impress of accurate original observation in every line. Readers whose tastes incline them to follow up this interesting subject will thus find abundant food for reflection in the recorded observations of a host of writers, from the early Jesuits, whose works have borne the test of two or three centuries of subsequent experience, down to the shoal of ephemeral paragraphists and photographers of our own day. This is not the place either for abridged discussion or for summarising conclusions on questions which do not fall within the scope of the present volume. Only one observation need be made, which ought to be borne in mind, alike in judging of their traditional customs and of their potential efficiency in the life of to-day. The two great facts which differentiate the Chinese from every other people of whom we have any knowledge are their unprecedented mass and their unprecedented duration. Without discussing the causes of one or the other feature, the bare facts are there, staring us in the face, and they surely explain much that strikes the foreigner as paradoxical. There has never been

* "Chinese Characteristics." Kegan Paul. 1895.

any such accumulated experience in the world's history; never such accumulation of custom, of ceremonial, of superstition. The early contemporaries of China have all fallen to pieces, some of them many times, and the continuity of tradition has been broken. But if we, instead of gathering their social history painfully from potsherds or paintings on tombs, or their religion from survivals of poetical mythology, found the Assyrians, Babylonians, ancient Egyptians and ancient Greeks alive at the present day, should we not expect to find the same maze of folk-lore as in China, the same confused and contradictory superstitions, layer upon layer, survivals from the oldest mingling with the newest accretions? The product resulting from duration multiplied by numbers must be immense, and if to that we add a third factor, isolation, we have no right to be surprised either at the complex character of Chinese civilisation or at its peculiarly conservative form. Indeed, whatever may have been the cause of the long life of the nation has probably also been the cause of its crystallisation. And that is what gives so hazardous a character to all innovations forced on China from without.

Leaving aside, for the moment, all these speculative questions, it may be profitable and practicable to consider in what relation the Chinese people stand to the outward and work-a-day world of our own time. What part are they capable of playing in the drama of mechanical progress, in which they are left no option but to join? To arrive at a just

opinion on this subject it will be better to consider the Chinese from the point of view of their likeness to ourselves, rather than from that of their unlikeness, which is the picturesque view. No nation can be fairly judged by its books, for there will always be a gulf fixed between aspiration and achievement, between the maxims of the study and the manners of the forum. For practical purposes we must take the Chinaman of real life, of active life. We have known him intimately for about sixty years—a cycle of Cathay—and can speak of his doings, if not of his thinkings. His predominant quality, that which marks the Chinese, as a race, whether at home or abroad, is beyond doubt his industry. He has almost a passion for labour: in search of it he compasses sea and land. He seems born to be the hewer of wood and the drawer of water for humanity, but not as a slave. The Chinaman is always a merchant and sells his labour for a price. In those countries where the race is persecuted it is his industry which offends, because it competes with the more desultory work of white men, who deem themselves entitled to dissipate half their time. Combined with the appetite for hard work the Chinaman has two highly important qualities—docility and temperance. The latter enables him to profit by a double economy—that of time and that of money; the former enables him to "stoop to conquer." There is, indeed, no end to his patience. He is content to exploit worked-out claims for an infinitesimal gain, and as ready to be kicked out when-

ever it pleases his superior white brother to come along and "jump" them. A valuable agent is the Chinaman, therefore, for sweeping up the "tailings" of human industry. He demands no comfort, still less luxury; but though he can do with rough and scanty fare, he never starves his body when he can afford nutritious and well-cooked food. For sentiment, as we understand the term, the Chinaman has no sympathy. His outward life is conducted on a "cash basis," so much so that when wages are very low he will sometimes strike a balance between work and food, calculating that, as a certain amount of exertion will necessitate so much food, the game may not always be worth the candle. He works outrageously long hours with very moderate inducement; the clink of the artisan's hammer and the whirr of the spindle are heard in the streets at all hours of the night, and the dawn finds the labourer already at work. The faculty of endurance and of patience is well evinced to foreigners in such occupations as domestic service and nursing, in both of which capacities the Chinaman excels. However late the master or mistress may come home, the servants are in waiting, and are as ready for a call in the early morning as if they had had twelve hours' good sleep. As nurses, Chinamen are quiet, light-handed and indefatigable: no need, with them, to reckon day and night shifts; such snatches of sleep as can be picked up at odd moments satisfy them.

In addition to robust muscularity the Chinese physique is endowed with great refinement. Their

hands and feet are well made, and the fingers are remarkable for suppleness and delicacy of touch. Their skill in the minutest kinds of handicraft, such as intricate carving in wood or ivory, miniature painting, and fine embroidery, are well known, and when European manufactures are introduced into China they will find no lack of the manual dexterity needed for the most delicate productions. Ample experience has shown the aptitude of Chinese artisans and mechanicians to fabricate in wood and metal and to become experts in the use of labour-saving machinery. Not only in workshops and building yards has the skill of their artificers been tested and approved, but in the responsible positions of engine-drivers on steamboats and locomotives under proper training, the Chinese are found to answer all requirements.

The intellectual capacity of the Chinese may rank with the best in Western countries. Their own literary studies, in which memory plays the important part, prove the nation to be capable of prodigious achievements in that direction. It is stated in Macaulay's Life that had "Paradise Lost" been destroyed he could have reproduced it from memory. But even such a power of memory as he possessed is small compared with that of many Chinese, who can repeat by heart all the thirteen classics; and it is as nothing to that of some Chinese, who, in addition to being able to repeat the classics, can memorise a large part of the general literature of their country. A Chinese acquaintance of mine was able, at the age of sixty-five, to reproduce,

verbatim, letters received by him in his youth from some of his literary friends famous as stylists. When pitted against European students in school or college the Chinese is in no respect inferior to his Western contemporaries, and, whether in mathematics and applied science or in metaphysics and speculative thought, he is capable of holding his own against all competitors.

In considering the future of the Chinese race, therefore, we have this enormous double fund of capacity to reckon with—capacity of muscle and capacity of brain; and we have only to imagine the quantitative value of such an aggregate of nervous force, when brought into vital contact with the active spirit and the mechanical and mental appliances of the West, to picture to ourselves a future for China which will astonish and may appal the world.

But while there are here the elements of an immense subordinate success—the success of muscular and intellectual force directed by a master—it does not follow, and there are many to be found who will deny, that the Chinese can ever play the leading *rôle*. Experience, it must be admitted, so far as it goes, gives its verdict against this, though the verdict is by no means final. And it is to be noted that Dr. Pearson, in his learned and well-thought-out work on "National Character and Development," ignores altogether the assumed disability of the Chinese to cope with the creative genius of the world. In favour of Dr. Pearson's hypothesis of the latent power of the Chinese race their mere numbers are a

telling fact, since, if the percentage of original initiating and directing minds among them were but a tithe of that of the Caucasian races, it would constitute them a real energising force in the future progress of the world. And, though the Chinese copy and do not originate, may there not be in them, nevertheless, a latent talent which is waiting for favourable circumstances to cause it to blossom into action? Before answering such a question as that, we should have to solve a few preliminary ones, as, for instance, the true cause of Chinese stagnation and of the sameness of their life routine.

Here, however, it may be appropriate to indicate briefly some traits of character and effects of hereditary training which militate against their success in the pursuits which have built up the power of the modern Christian states. Only a few of the more obvious need be noted. One is universally acknowledged: it is the indifference to truth, as such. A lie is no disgrace; it is only disgraceful not to put a good "face" on things. Combine these two ideas, and the natural result is universal mistrust, which places co-operation, without which even a pin cannot be economically made, largely out of the question. The entire absence of natural science, and of any definiteness of conception or arrangement in matters not rigidly prescribed by traditional etiquette, coincides with the unconsciousness of the value of accuracy; but the question is whether the general

introduction of science as part of the educational curriculum, followed by its extensive application to the business of life, will not cure this radical defect in the moral equipment of the nation. That such a result would be, at the least, a protracted affair, the most sanguine can hardly doubt, nor will the process be rendered the more easy by the fact that the Chinese have discovered certain working substitutes for factual truth. Meadows has pointed out that personal probity is not relied upon, because the business of life, mercantile and domestic, is carried on under a chain of guaranties, infidelity to which is of very rare occurrence. In a general reform of the code of honour, this time-honoured institution would have to be uprooted, rendering the whole operation doubly difficult and, indeed, impossible, except as a result of protracted evolution.

Closely allied with untruthfulness is the looseness of conscience in the handling of money. The process known as "robbing Peter to pay Paul," of patching a hole by a piece cut out of the garment, forms a part of the Chinese practice, from the Emperor downwards. Even in the returns of the Imperial revenue* the authorities seem to prefer

* Generally four-tenths of the Foreign Customs duties are appropriated directly by the Peking Government. From the remaining six-tenths there are first paid out the indents for the Peking Government as above stated, which are most specifically charged on the six-tenths; then there are the local costs of collection and numerous fixed allowances; then 15 per cent. is set apart and remitted to the Shanghai Taotai for expense of foreign legations; and the balance is apportioned from time to time by the Board between Imperial and provincial needs.—Geo. Jamieson, C.M.G., *Foreign Office Reports*, 1897.

that deductions be made from disbursements before remittances are forwarded, rather than that the full revenue be shown on one side of the account and the full expenditure on the other. Such a system invites peculation, which is carried on wholesale throughout every government department. The shifty tendency pervades every relation of life: shameless malversation is tolerated as a mere peccadillo where a breach of filial etiquette would be punishable as a crime. With such a code of financial morality it would apparently be impossible to develop joint-stock enterprise, for no confidence would be felt in the integrity of the management. Some such companies, however, do exist in Hongkong. Mines do not pay the proprietors because the labourers pilfer the production;* cotton factories because the mill hands carry off the raw material, stowed away in their clothes. The most important Chinese companies

* In a memorial to the Throne, Fang Chiung, Director of Mines in Yunnan, reports that "a great deal of illicit mining is carried on by the people, and the officials are afraid of the consequences of asserting their rights despotically. A plan has, however, been devised of buying up the copper privately mined by the natives at a low price, and thus taking advantage of the extra labour by a measure at once profitable and popular. In this way the memorialist thinks the mines will work well." In a postscript memorial the Director informs the Emperor that 10,000 catties of copper are bought monthly from the illicit mines, and that the labourers are "not paid wages, but are supplied with oil and rice."—*Peking Gazette*, quoted by A. H. Smith, who adds, "it is not every day that a governor officially informs an emperor that the laws of his empire are habitually violated by persons with whom the magistrates dare not interfere, but whom, on the other hand, they mollify with oil and sufficient money to induce them to part with their stolen copper."

are machines for wholesale misappropriation of funds, a state of things which is always aggravated in cases where an official has a hand in the manipulation. While such an all-sufficing explanation exists, it seems needless to seek for more speculative reasons for the want of enterprise of the Chinese, or for the well-known fact that they are willing to place their funds at low interest with foreign banks rather than trust their own countrymen on more tempting terms. This preference for foreign security, based on foreign integrity, is the principal lever by which the commercial, industrial and financial resources of China will hereafter be developed. It is only by organised probity that we can compete with the Chinese. I do not advance this as a principle or a theory of Chinese morals, but merely as an empirical observation, for it is in flat contradiction of other facts equally well known. The probity of Chinese merchants and bankers is proverbial, and is no doubt the basis of their success in these enterprises. As the Chinese have no separate castes, it is hard to account for such apparently contradictory phenomena as exceptional fidelity in certain walks of life and systematic fraud in others, the line of demarcation being moreover sharply drawn.

That some general cause is in operation to produce such disparate results seems evident, and the explanation may possibly be found in the special training which is required by different avocations, and the selection of the men who are to follow

them. Every profession has its own code of honour and rule of practice, and every society its law of self-preservation. Commerce cannot be carried on without confidence, and the continuous experience of many centuries has burned this law into the hearts of those who are enrolled under its banner. Natural selection will tend constantly to the rejection of individuals who do not obey the law by which alone a commercial community can live, and the hereditary principle lends its potent aid towards keeping the body pure. Traditions handed down from father to son, not so much in formal maxims as in daily practice, enter deeply into the character; and children follow unconsciously and automatically the ways of their fathers and families, in contact with whom they have grown up. They would find it difficult to do otherwise.

The different code of honour which prevails in official circles, on the other hand, may equally be pleaded as a necessity of existence. No government official in China can possibly live on his pay; his necessary expenses many times exceed it. What is he to do? Immemorial tradition points out the way. The ox is not muzzled that treads out the corn. Of course official corruption is an insidious poison, not only as affecting the efficiency of the public service but also the personal character of the individual. Once admit bribery or malversation as a justifiable means of living, and it is impossible to draw the line. Necessity soon becomes rapacity, and rapacity grows by what it feeds upon. It is

astonishing that any vestige of character is left in men who have graduated in the official school. Some, indeed, there are who resist the common temptation, and are regarded as a kind of monstrosity of virtue—a sort of "white elephant"—who for this reason may claim unlimited indulgence. Such officials must either be themselves wealthy, have wealthy friends, or be financed by some shrewd man of business, who manages everything behind the back of his principal.

The danger of new enterprises lies in the circumstance that they fall outside the tradition, and therefore outside the protection, of the professional code which is so efficacious within its own sphere. If an official personage has any concern in the undertaking, his dominant idea is to make it a milch-cow for himself; his whole habit of mind would militate against his paying any regard to the rights of shareholders.

Where the commercial morality of the Chinese is at its worst is where it comes in contact with Western legality. They are shown in an unfavourable light when, for example, they are called upon to pay up calls on their shares in limited companies registered abroad. This is one of those cases where their tradition fails to support them in a right course, the whole thing being alien from their own customs. Neither family honour nor public opinion concerns itself with such strange devices as foreign legal forms, which are as unintelligible to the Chinese as to the unlettered peasantry of Europe. There

is no sanctity attaching to them, and if their terms can be successfully evaded, and without prejudicing one's interest in other ways, it is considered permissible, the mere moral sanction counting for little. Rectitude of conduct between man and man is secured among themselves in an entirely different manner: everything is regulated by custom, which possesses greater vitality than judge-made or statute-made law. A mercantile contract, for example, drawn up and signed, is held of quite secondary validity; but if bargain-money has been paid it is unimpugnable, and bargain-money without the paper is of greater efficacy than the paper without bargain-money. It is not, therefore, to be expected that a people living and moving in such an atmosphere of tradition and custom should adapt themselves easily to the machinery of foreign legislation, which in its subject-matter is necessarily altogether uncouth to their ideas, varies more or less in each nationality with which they have to deal, and is subject to change in each new session of some foreign parliament which to them has not even the consistency of a myth.

"Respect for the law," as a virtue of civilised peoples, cannot apply to exotic regulations which are alien in their nature as well as in their source. The sentiment bred in the bone of the Chinese people is not respect but reverence for law; it is more than religion to them. But the foreign manufactured article is as a strange god introduced into their pantheon; it takes no hold of their moral sense. The whole attitude of the Chinese towards this kind

of law, therefore, differs fundamentally from that of the peoples of the West, and this should be taken into account by all who have business with the people of China. The Chinese look to quite other safeguards in commercial dealings than Englishmen do, who have always a solicitor at their elbow and learned counsel to consult on every clause and shade of meaning of a contract. In the first place, the Chinese merchant or banker places no reliance whatever on litigation, but takes his measures as if there were no such thing to fall back upon. His first line of defence against fraud or misunderstanding is to select his *clientèle* on the most rigid principle, and deal only with men of known character and untainted connections, in such a manner as to be able to follow him into all the transactions he may undertake. It is this perfect mutual knowledge which cements the confidence between men of business, and the customs which are better known to them than any legal enactments can possibly be to the people of Europe rule every transaction that is doubtful. Written contracts have scarcely any place in the Chinese system, whereas they are the very essence of ours. Our jurists place the verbal construction of an agreement before everything, while in China the whole stress is laid on the obvious and reasonable intention of the parties; the one regards only the documentary contract, the other the thing contracted for. The difference between the two points of view is almost irreconcilable, and it is as erroneous for us to test Chinese equity by

means of our standard, as for the Chinese to judge us wanting in good faith because we take advantage of a technicality to avoid a disadvantageous obligation. The moral to be drawn from this state of things would seem to be that each party should take the other on its own ground—that foreigners should rely on Chinese time-consecrated sanctions to bind the Chinese commercial conscience, and that the Chinese should trust foreigners only so far as they can have written contracts signed, sealed, and delivered.

An element of distrust between Chinese and foreigners—which is really a phase of that natural instinct of resting on the substance and not on the form—is the looseness and disregard of punctuality which characterise the Chinese. Except in banking transactions, time with them has not the same recognised value as it has to us, and their habits are easier and more slovenly. This leads to irritation and sometimes needless suspicion when an important engagement is not kept, and when either no excuse is thought necessary or the most ridiculous reasons are given. Much should be allowed for mere habit in such matters, and a great deal more for the complex life Chinamen lead. It is alleged against them that they are superstitious, but it is scarcely possible for a foreigner to conceive how completely their lives are enveloped in cobwebs of necromancy, geomancy, witchcraft, animal worship, luck, evil eye, and a thousand influences which seem to us grotesque and childish. This is a natural result of the long

duration of the people, which has permitted the accretions of three thousand years to be preserved in a gigantic accumulation, whereas the primitive beliefs and folk-lore of Western peoples have been broken up by their migrations, wars, and commotions. Almost every conceivable action of a Chinaman's life is prescribed by a minute etiquette which no one dreams of disregarding. Being unintelligible to foreigners, this necessarily creates friction in their mutual relations. But in addition to this the Chinese, even the most reasonable and most practical, are under the dominion of sorcerers and fortune-tellers and the reign of "luck" to such an extent, that they are in constant apprehension of doing or saying things at the wrong time, the wrong place, in the wrong way, or in company with the wrong people. A promising combination may be spoiled by some occult warning, and a Chinaman may often have bad faith imputed to him when he is really under the constraint of some influence which he dare not avow, and which causes him to make a shuffling and mendacious excuse.

What is most mysterious in Chinese ways would probably be simple enough if we were in sympathy with the explanation. Probably the fundamental principle of their national and private life, the family idea, if well understood, would supply the key to many seeming peculiarities. To dub them idolaters because they worship their ancestors is begging the question. It were more to the purpose to examine into the relationship which is called "worship"

and see what an important part these ancestors play in Chinese life. Their authority seems to be the power which keeps the nation together; they are one with their posterity, and the ancestral tomb is the family altar.

Hear Carlyle on the matter:

"He (the Emperor) and his three hundred millions visit yearly the Tombs of their Fathers; each man the Tomb of his Father and his Mother; alone there, in silence, with what of *worship* or of other thought there may be, pauses solemnly each man; the divine Skies all silent over him; the divine Graves, and this divinest Grave, all silent under him; the pulsings of his own soul, if he have any soul, alone audible. Truly it may be a kind of worship. Truly if a man cannot get some glimpse into the Eternities, looking through this portal,—through what other need he try it?"

The ancestors assist at the family council and sanction its proceedings. The effect on the practical or business life of the people of the ancestral cult is various. The family being the unit of the State, there is a collective responsibility for the behaviour of each member, in consequence of which order is kept in every village and city without the supervision of military or police. This alone is no slight gain. The family responsibility in financial matters, too, gives security in business, for a debt is never cancelled except by payment, and descends as a burden from father to son. A bad side of the system is the moral obligation which rests on any one who is rich to support all the members, for obviously such a principle discourages enterprise and industry. It stands seriously in the way of material progress,

for no sooner does a man by his own energy establish some promising industry than he is pounced upon by all the ne'er-do-wells of his family, who live upon him and whom he is obliged to employ to the exclusion of useful men, even to the ruin of his enterprise. It is impossible for a Chinaman to emancipate himself from this family incubus, and the fact must be reckoned with in all schemes for co-operation with Chinese.

In all estimates of the social system, a practical distinction must be made between the Chinese people in their individual and their public capacity; between their utility as material to be moulded and managed by others, and their power to organise and lead their own forces—industrial, commercial, political and military. In what has gone before, the former forces have been glanced at; we will now refer briefly to the latter.

The Chinese in public life, as we conceive the idea, is as yet an unknown quantity. The nation does not concern itself with political affairs any more than, on the advice of Confucius, it concerns itself with theological affairs. The popular maxim is that, as the mandarins are paid (and pay themselves) for attending to public administration, it is their business to do it, while the public cultivates its garden and pays its taxes. As this is not a philosophical treatise we are not tempted to speculate on the development of this state of feeling, or on its significance, further than to make the obvious remark that a faculty that has never been used, or that has fallen out of use, is

virtually non-existent. We may conclude, accurately enough for practical purposes, that public spirit is an unknown sentiment to the Chinese people. To our appreciation, the Chinese as a nation exhibit no patriotism; but this may be the effect of our own prejudice and want of insight into the true relation between the subject and object of what we call patriotism. Instances of the loftiest and purest devotion are not rare, nor in these cases does the ideal appear very different from our own. Speaking, however, only of what operates on the masses as we see them, and not as they may be intrinsically, we should perhaps be justified in saying that what represents the feeling of patriotism in China is a survival of clannishness which affects small segregated areas,—not a provincial or even a civic patriotism, but rather a local village spirit which on occasion is capable of combining to resist extortion or resent interference. We have elsewhere shown how this great political vacuum in the Chinese social organism is partly supplied by secret societies, as in the commercial sphere the juridical gap is supplied by trade guilds. The officials themselves possess their defensive combinations, each province having in the capital a society, which we call a "club," where gatherings are held daily to discuss public affairs. These clubs are managed with considerable strictness, and the very highest officials may be expelled when accused of conduct derogatory to the character of the society. It is interesting to note that the particular offence which has led to a sentence of

expulsion in conspicuous cases has been "truckling to foreigners." For this the most respected and influential official in the last two generations, Tsêng Kwo Fan, father of the late Marquis Tsêng, was expelled from the Hunan Club in Peking, and many years and many sacrifices were required before he could gain readmission. This general, perhaps universal, feeling—a most natural and proper feeling, we must admit—against foreigners is by some maintained to be the only article in the Chinese code which may fitly be called patriotic. But though general, it is not centralised, nor does it lead to any common action. The whole Empire may have one feeling while each locality stands separate from all the others, and thus the country may always be conquered in detail. Reverence for the Throne undoubtedly exists as the apex of that great pyramid, the family system, but is rather a sublimated religious than a political sentiment. There is no vital attachment in it, no loyalty which commands sacrifice, and among the officials even the genuine feeling of devotion to the Imperial service has probably been absorbed into and dissipated by the hyperbolic formulæ prescribed for their memorials and addresses.

Associated with the political are the military sentiments of the Chinese people: there we find the same general principle prevailing—that of aloofness or indifference. If they ever were warlike the Chinese have ceased for very many centuries to be so. The nation has survived the military age, and the only treatises extant on

strategy date from before the Christian era. When forced to fight, which they will seldom do if there is a chance of running away, their tactics are more primitive than those of Zulus. There is no concentration: each regiment or battalion fights for itself exclusively. None will assist another, still less will any section of a force sacrifice itself for the general success.

The personal courage of Chinese soldiers is usually estimated at a low value, but there are extenuating and explanatory circumstances. The manner in which a Chinese force is levied, the way it is treated, paid and led should excuse much in the private soldier. When sent unarmed, as they virtually were in the late Japanese War, against highly disciplined and well-armed hosts, the only sensible thing to be done was to retreat, and, as in that movement at least their commanders could generally be counted on to set a good example, they fell back in greater or less disorder before the invaders. But when they were paid, fed, disciplined, and armed, as was the case in the Chinese navy, the men left little to be desired in the way of courage. Even then, however, they needed leading. Under a European officer there was no forlorn hope or desperate service for which they would not volunteer; and they rallied round the brave Admiral Ting, whom they were ready to follow to a heroic death, when he was shut in a trap in his own port, Wei-hai-wei. It has always been the personal qualities of a man, rather than a cause, which attracted the Chinese. Gordon could have

led them anywhere. So, no doubt, could Admiral Ting.

It is probably a mere question of organisation with the Chinese, as with the Egyptians. The Chinese have shown themselves apt learners and they are capable of drill and discipline. Confidence will do the rest, confidence in their leaders and—*in their pay*.

Distinction may be justly drawn between the populations of different parts of the vast Empire. The Cantonese have always been of a daring character, which for many years unfortunately expended itself in wholesale piracy on the coast. The natives of Shantung, however, where the Germans have established themselves, and whose overflow has peopled the rich lands of Manchuria, enjoy the finest record for both physical and moral qualities. It was from them the Chinese navy drew its best recruits ; it is they who have proved their prowess either as brigands or as self-reliant and self-defended exploiters of the resources of Liaotung and Manchuria. Consequently, the power of assimilating these warlike, industrious, and intelligent people is an advantage to Russia no less important than her territorial acquisitions.

When all is said, however, it must still be conceded that it is not military, or scientific, or political, but commercial genius that has characterised the Chinese in the past, and is therefore most likely to distinguish them in the future. They are the original, true, and only real shopkeepers, and in

every position of life, even the farthest removed from the atmosphere of commerce, the Chinese may be said to think in money. As with the Jew, their instinctive habit is one of perpetual appraisement. No matter what object may be shown to them for their instruction or admiration, their first and last thought is what it cost; and conversations overheard among boatmen, coolies, and labourers turn invariably on the same topic—money. This trait of character cannot be better described than in the words of the Abbé Huc, in his "Chinese Empire":

"The Chinese has a passionate love of lucre; he is fond of all kinds of speculation and stock-jobbing, and his mind, full of finesse and cunning, takes delight in combining and calculating the chances of a commercial operation.

"The Chinese, *par excellence*, is a man installed behind the counter of a shop, waiting for his customers with patience and resignation, and in the intervals of their arrival pondering in his head and casting up on his little arithmetical machine the means of increasing his fortune. Whatever may be the nature and importance of his business, he neglects not the smallest profit; the least gain is always welcome, and he accepts it eagerly; greatest of all is his enjoyment when, in the evening, having well closed and barricaded his shop, he can retire into some corner, and there count up religiously the number of his sapecks, and reckon the earnings of the day.

"The Chinese is born with this taste for traffic, which grows with his growth and strengthens with his strength. The first thing a child longs for is a sapeck; the first use that he makes of his speech and intelligence is to learn to articulate the names of coins; when his little fingers are strong enough to hold the pencil, it is with making figures that he amuses himself, and as soon as the tiny creature can speak and walk he is capable of buying and selling."

Nor is it the mere gain that inspires the passion for merchandising. In common with Orientals generally, the Chinese are fascinated by the sport of bargaining, as a cat is by playing its mouse or a fisherman his salmon. It is said that the great Li Hung Chang derived a purer pleasure from "doing" an *employé* out of half a month's pay, as the result of an afternoon's contest, than if he had saved a province of the Empire—a weakness which has no doubt often been turned to profitable account by those who had important transactions with that eminent statesman. It is held to be a maxim of wisdom for an undergraduate to let his rich uncle have the better of him at chess. Human nature is essentially the same everywhere; the point of difference to be noted here between Oriental and Occidental is that time seems to be of no account to the one, whilst to the other it is a synonym for money, which is of prime value to both.

And in connection with money-making there is another point to be noticed and kept in mind in regard to the Chinese, in which they are distinguished from the races of the West, and perhaps of the East as well. Though parsimonious, the Chinaman is not mean. He is generous almost to a fault when the humour takes him—has a supreme disregard of trifles in settling an account, for example, takes a loss stoically, lends freely with small expectation of return, and rarely sues for a debt. The ease of the Chinese in money dealing contrasts strongly with the exigence with which they are treated by

foreigners with whom they traffic. And yet in the essence of things there may be no real superiority or inferiority, for the liberality in the one case may be referred to the general laxity of Chinese reckoning and to the margin of perquisites on which they instinctively fall back, while the severity in the other case belongs to the precision of accounts and the absence of any margin of debatable ground where generosity might find pasture. In the West the open-handed man too often comes to penury, while in the East "there is that scattereth and yet increaseth."

The combination of the qualities of avarice and profusion sometimes produces results which, though entirely natural in themselves, are both comical and paradoxical when viewed from a foreign standpoint. Once upon a time the agent at one of the minor ports for a wealthy firm in Shanghai lived in the somewhat lordly style which had been inherited from the East India Company. His "boy" or butler and his whole domestic staff made a good thing out of the establishment. Times changed, and the big firm ceased business. Left stranded, the agent decided to set up for himself and work the connections he had formed among natives and foreign merchants. But the old scale of expenditure could not be supported. Summoning his faithful "boy," he explained the situation to him—impossible to keep up the old expensive style of living, very sorry to part with such a good old servant, and so forth. The boy rose to the occasion in a somewhat sur-

prising manner. "What for masta too muchee sollee? My too sollee masta no catchee good chance. My like stay this side. Masta how much can pay?" (Why is master so sorrowful? I am very sorry that master is not doing well. I should like to stay in master's service. How much can master afford to pay?) The master scratched his forehead and paused, then named a sum which was just two-thirds of what his house bills had hitherto amounted to. "Maskee, masta; masta talkee so muchee, can do" (Never mind, master; whatever you say will do), said the accommodating serving-man. So the *ménage* proceeded, everything exactly as before—table as bountiful, servants as smart and as respectful, but the monthly charge thirty per cent. less. A year passed; the new business had been uphill work, as new businesses are wont to be; the emolument was disappointing. Again the master had to make an explanation to the servant; again the solution of the difficulty was to reduce the establishment. "Never mind, master, tell me how much you think you can pay," was the substance of his boy's reply. The master was seriously taken aback, but he named a figure which was just one-half of what he had originally been paying. The boy accepted as cheerfully as before and went on his way rejoicing, and the *ménage* proceeded, not a salad leaf or a partridge or a mushroom the less; only the cost was reduced to very modest proportions. Of course it is open to remark that the wily Chinaman had been extortionate in the high old

time—but what elasticity of accommodation, what fellowship in misfortune!

Take a converse case of more recent occurrence in Peking. A French gentleman there keeping house with his wife had gone on smoothly and economically for many years, no ripple disturbing the surface of their domestic felicity. By-and-by they found a substantial increase in their monthly budget. They remonstrated with their head servant, but in vain. Stolidly, month after month, he brought in the same bill, until at last the master resolved to part with the servant, and did. When the successor came and was being inducted he observed to the master, "What thing masta talkee? How can? S'pose that piecee man have talkee so fashon, that b'long tlue. My no can makee more plopa. He b'long welly good man," which, being interpreted, meant that he could not manage any cheaper than his predecessor. The master was surprised at this speech, argued the matter for a little, but could make nothing more out of the new servant. At the end of the first month, sure enough, the account came to within a fraction of what it had been. Remonstrance from master respectfully received, but the following month the same old charge. The master gave it up, and went on resignedly as if in the clutches of Fate. But when some time had elapsed, and all controversy had ceased, the master, disputing no longer, begged the servant, merely to satisfy curiosity, to explain to him how it had come about that the scale of charge which had gone on the same for so

many years had suddenly risen without any change in market prices or any other apparent reason. Taken into confidence in this way, the boy looked blandly at his master and said: "Masta six moon fore time have catchee good chance. Allo man too muchee glad. Masta have catchee good chance, allo man can catchee too," which means that, the master having had a piece of good fortune six months before, all the servants considered themselves entitled to their share.

We should not do the Chinese justice without carrying the money test of character a stage higher, almost into the region of pure ethics. It is not uncommon to impute ingratitude to them. But the rule applies, East and West alike, that a bad master never had a good servant, and those who most loudly cry out against ingratitude are usually those who have merited nothing else. There are two sides to all human relations; sentiments are not self-existent, but, like vertebrates, are the product of two parents. All foreigners who have studied the Chinese in a human, sympathetic manner, like Meadows, Smith and others, testify to their devotion and gratitude. So many instances of this are recorded that it must be taken as natural to the Chinese to attach themselves heart and soul to any one, be he native or foreigner, who once gains their confidence. And the way to do that is explained by Meadows; it is to show them, not by words, but by acts, that you are thinking of their welfare as much as your own. There is no

mystery in this; it holds good of all races and of all periods. But the gratitude of Orientals, Africans and others, has freer play than that of our own people because of the accommodating quality of their social relations and the extraordinary supply which their numbers afford. Stereotyped as are the Chinese relations in certain respects, they admit of great elasticity in others, thanks to the family and clan system, which makes it easy and common to find substitutes for almost any occasion. This enables a man to attach himself to a master or follow a leader whom he appreciates, and to detach himself from his family, and even from business engagements, for indefinite periods. There are many foreigners who can speak from experience of such proofs of devotion and gratitude.

That the family spirit expands and perpetuates the individual sentiment the following illustration will show.

It happened to an Englishman once to revisit China after the lapse of many years. One day he was surprised to receive a call from some Chinese whom he did not know. They were well dressed and most respectful. After the usual conventional preliminaries the principal man of the party, which seemed like a deputation, explained that he was the son of a Chinese gentleman who had died more than twenty years before, while the speaker was still a child; that he had been told by his relatives of the kindness which the Englishman had shown to his father in those old days, but had never, since he

grew up, had any means of expressing his gratitude. Now it had come to his ears that a person bearing the name of his father's friend had recently arrived in the town, but he could not tell if it was the same. So he paid this visit merely to find out, was overjoyed to have discovered him and begged to be allowed to pay his homage on another occasion. Exchange of family news naturally took place, and on his next visit the Chinese gentleman came laden with valuable presents specially selected for the respective children of his casually discovered English friend.

Instances of large-heartedness in money matters in which foreigners have been the beneficiaries are indeed comparatively common. In the last generation they were still more so, for commerce, especially that portion of it which was centred in Canton, was conducted in a grander, more merchant-prince-like fashion than the circumstances of our day admit of. Complete trust was the rule between the old Hong merchants and the European and American traders, and business was transacted in whole shiploads. The friendly relations then established subsisted for a generation after the destruction of the "factories," in 1856, and the inauguration of the new era, which is of a more individualised and retail character. One well-known survivor of the old *régime*, an American gentleman, Mr. X., who was alive in Canton in 1884, had, in consequence of the collapse of his firm, fallen from affluence to penury, and was personally deeply in debt to certain of the representatives of the old "co-hong." Seeing that the veteran remained

on in Canton, never visiting his home and family, his Chinese friend asked him why he denied himself the natural solace of his old age—permanent separation from the family home being specially intolerable to a Chinese—and guessing the reason, it is said he produced Mr. X.'s note of hand for a large amount, and tore it up before the maker, saying, "Now, are you free to return to your home?" Whether literally accurate in its details or not, the mere currency of such a story goes a long way towards proving the contention.

Of course it may be said these are exceptional cases, and so they are. But the question is—on which side is the exception; on that of the Chinese or that of the foreigners? If more of the latter endeavoured to gain the confidence of the former in the natural way, would not the experience of grateful, devoted and trustworthy Chinese be greatly extended? And, considering the race antipathy that keeps them apart, the fact that any instances at all of such kindly relations ever come within the experience of foreigners affords strong presumption that among themselves the Chinese maintain a more than friendly, a really generous, intercourse.

One of the most valuable qualities of the Chinese people, considered with reference to their utility in the future development of their country, is their marvellous tolerance of things disagreeable and their invincible contentment under all circumstances. Every traveller, every one who has had opportunities of observing them, testifies to their unfailing

good humour under every kind of discomfort and under the severest bodily toil. Their cheerfulness is undaunted: neither cold nor heat, neither hunger nor fatigue, has power to depress them, nor does misfortune or natural calamity or sickness provoke them to repine. As Giles says, "They seem to have acquired a national habit of looking upon the bright side."

According to A. H. Smith, "to be happy is more than they expect, but they are willing to be as happy as they can." Possibly they follow Carlyle unknowingly, and do not recognise "happiness" at all as an object in life, and therefore they enjoy the more of it—enjoy all they get, instead of vexing themselves about what they lack. Smith tells us of a Chinese who was employed by a foreigner—no doubt himself—in pushing a heavy wheelbarrow on journeys, often months in duration.

"Upon these trips it was necessary to start early, to travel late, to transport heavy loads over steep and rugged mountains, in all seasons and in all weathers, fording chilling rivers with bare feet and legs, and at the end of every stage to prepare his master's food and lodging. All this laborious work was done for a very moderate compensation, and always without complaint; and at the end of *several years* of this service his master testified that he had never once seen this servant out of temper!"

I may venture to add on my own account that this description seems to me typical. Now, to put the merits of such a placid temper on the lowest utilitarian grounds, consider what an economy of nervous friction is implied in a working life passed

in such a happy frame of mind. Is it not alone a source of wealth to the people who possess it?

Smith adds his experience of the Chinaman in sickness:

"Their cheery hopefulness," he says, "often does not forsake them in physical weakness and in extreme pain. We have known multitudes of cases where Chinese patients, suffering from every variety of disease, frequently in deep poverty, not always adequately nourished, at a distance from their homes, sometimes neglected or even abandoned by their relatives, and with no ray of hope for the future visible, yet maintained a cheerful equanimity of temper which was a constant, albeit unintentional, rebuke to the nervous impatience which," &c.

He concludes his chapter with the observation which may also fitly conclude the present one: "If the teaching of history as to what happens to 'the fittest' is to be trusted, there is a magnificent future for the Chinese race."

CHAPTER XI

CHINESE DEMOCRACY

It is natural that every serious observer of Chinese life should exercise his mind on the causes of the nation's longevity. Several of our best writers, including the more philosophical, have, with a considerable amount of confidence, assigned quasi-scientific grounds for the perpetuity of China in defiance of what over the rest of the earth's surface has been the "law of nations"—the succession of youth, maturity and decay. It is due to the form of government, say some, the principles of government, the principle of selection of officials, the chain of responsibility, the literature, the maxims of Confucius and Mencius, filial piety and the promise attached to the fifth commandment (the *only* "commandment," the other nine being prohibitions) of the Mosaic decalogue, and so on. We cannot consider any one or all of these, or sundry other explanations, as satisfactory; neither do we presume to offer one. The true cause of Chinese permanence is probably very complex, and it will require a good deal more of sympathetic and persevering study before the philosophy of the

Chinese race and policy can be formulated in any acceptable manner.

But of the contributory causes of a national vitality which has vanquished all conquerors, certainly not the least interesting is the faculty of local self-government which runs in the Chinese blood.* While it may help to prevent the development of nationality in its wide sense, this quality of the race keeps alive the constituents of nationality in separate small communities, and in a form as indestructible as protoplasm, which cannot in fact be broken up except by extermination. Or they may be likened to an infinite multitude of water-tight cells, which keep the whole mass afloat in the most turbulent sea. And supplementing the family and village groups which lie at the bottom of the national life, which are rooted in the soil and have their fixed rallying-points visible to the public eye, are an indefinite number of other groupings—special, variable, not territorially attached—which are the spontaneous outcome of felt needs, wherein professions, classes, interests and aims form the

* "Amid all political convulsions the people have remained unchanged, and that mainly because they are a non-political people. They are indifferent to affairs of State, but intent on their own business. Yet they have the faculty of self-government developed in an eminent degree. They are quiet, orderly, and industrious; averse to agitation of any kind, and ready to endure great sacrifices for the sake of peace. Such a people are easily governed, and their instinct of self-government is one important element in their longevity as a nation: it has enabled successive dynasties, often weak and vacillating, arbitrary and corrupt, to control three hundred millions of people. This constitutes the elasticity by which they regain lost ground."—*The Siberian Overland Route*, by A. Michie. 1864.

organic pivot. This disposition of the Chinese people to arrange themselves in special organisations or coteries is clearly congenital and its action automatic, as in the elective affinity of crystals; for they carry it with them wherever they go; and of them it may be truly said that wherever two or three are gathered together they will promptly form themselves into a "society" of some sort.

In treating of the Chinese Government in a previous chapter, the two heterogeneous departments—that which is indigenous to the soil and that which has been imposed from without or from above—were indicated. There can be little doubt which of the two is the more ancient, and, paradox though the statement may seem, there is equally little doubt which is the more authoritative. It is the peasant who rules, by a human right which no "Son of Heaven" dares to question. When he does, he forfeits his own right, and another will soon occupy his seat. It has been the wisdom of successive dynasties to respect this "law of the land," to protect the people in all their privileges, and to base on this universal suffrage their own right to reign. In the "Shuking"—that most ancient classic—three canons of government are laid down, of which one is "That the people have the right to depose a sovereign who either from active wickedness or vicious indolence gives cause to oppressive or tyrannical rule." "Public opinion," says Huc, "is always ready to check any excesses on the part of the Emperor, who could not, without exciting general indigna-

tion, dare to violate the rights of any of his subjects;" and again, though "they are in general submissive to authority, when it becomes too tyrannical or merely fraudulent, the Chinese sometimes rise and bend it to their will." Confucius represents the sovereignty as a sacred mission entrusted for the time being to the "Son of Heaven," but a successful revolutionary easily becomes the Elect of Heaven.

The rights of the people are primarily the possession of their land, freedom of industry and trade, and the control of their local affairs. As to the land, the Emperor is in theory the sole proprietor of the soil—a convenient legal fiction; but in practice his right is limited to the collection of the land-tax, except in case of rebellion or other cause of forfeiture. And it is a fundamental law of the Empire that the land-tax can never be increased. No people in the world, says Richthofen, are more exempt from official interference.

Nevertheless, the two great systems, a centralised autocracy and a democratic self-government, are far from homogeneous; they resemble two extensive alien territories possessing a long common frontier. With the greatest submissiveness on the one side and the most prudent accommodation on the other, there must be friction and occasional aggressions. The benevolence of the Emperor, when filtered down through nine grades of officials, may be turned to vexation and sheer tyranny when it reaches the last rank, which is in contact with the people. The question must therefore be never

absent from consideration how the people are to defend themselves from arbitrary officials; and, as the question must have arisen in primitive times, it has of course been long since answered by experience. In public affairs the people have no share whatever; the elective principle does not operate above the village or group of villages, whose head-man is the go-between, the joint, between the people and the Government. But it is a weak joint, quite inadequate to the duties expected of it, and is only maintained in working order by being spared, as much as possible, the strain of actual use. Having no representative system through which their grievances could be made known, the censors would appear to be the sole constitutional machinery for the protection of the people from rapacity or tyranny. But they number only two to a province as large as a kingdom, and they share in the common corruption, so that there is practically no means provided by the State whereby the oppressed may obtain a hearing in the superior courts. This seems a serious defect in a system which is so elaborate and which is based on popular content. But what the framers of the Constitution have failed to supply in a regular manner the exigencies of their life have compelled the nation to provide by irregular means. In the absence of a tribunal they simply take the law into their own hands—a rough-and-ready, cruel and often disastrous remedy for grievances. In small local questions the populace will sometimes resent an

imposition by seizing the official sent to enforce it, dragging him by the heels out of his sedan-chair, pulling his official boots off—a great indignity—and throwing him into the nearest ditch. That ends the

PROVINCES RAVAGED BY MOHAMMEDAN RISINGS.

matter;—it is the last court of appeal. The magistrate who has failed is reprimanded as incompetent, and sent to another part of the country, although the governor who thus condemns him be himself the culpable party. In this we see how much officialism in China resembles that in Christian countries.

When the grievance is more widespread and is long continued, and the officials are obstinate, there may be what is called a local rising, which has to be put down by massacre; else the smoking flax may spread to a conflagration. And this, the ultimate remedy in the West, is the proximate remedy in the East, for want of any adequate intermediate machinery of redress.

Thus the sacred "right of rebellion" has asserted itself in China. Meadows, writing in the midst of the Taiping devastation and in immediate touch with its horrors, justified it by elaborate arguments, and showed historically that such outbreaks had been an essential feature in the nation's development. China has, indeed, been called the classic ground of revolutions, as many as twelve having occurred between 420 and 1644 A.D.; but rebellions have been innumerable. The Empire is never, indeed, free from them; they are of all dimensions, and of varied durations. During the past forty years there have been many important ones. The province of Yunnan has been depopulated by them; likewise Kweichau; several times have serious rebellions, besides that of Yakub Beg, arisen among the Mohammedans in the north-west of China proper itself; the great Taiping calamity was followed by numerous smaller insurrections in the province of Shantung and in Kansu and Shensi.

In the rebellions of 1865—when China lost control of Shensi, Kansu and Kashgaria—the operations were carried on in the usual desultory Chinese

Original Seat of the Insurrection.
Zone of the Greatest Devastation.
Zones of the Spread of the Insurrection.

REGIONS DEVASTATED BY THE TAIPING REBELLION.

fashion. Tso, who crushed the rebellion, had as many as 100,000 troops under his command, and was more energetic than is usual; but it was by making roads, by starving out the towns, and especially by the employment of diplomacy—namely, by the judicious use of "rewards," and by winning over the Mohammedan religious leaders through titles and buttons—that the Chinese "strategy" eventually was successful.

The rebellion in Kansu, in 1896, was conducted in much the same fashion, but the Mohammedans were in smaller numbers and showed a less decided front. In their risings the Moslems have always failed for want of concerted action; they worked in isolated bands, and therefore were only able to devastate the country, cut off straggling bodies of the Chinese troops, or massacre the inhabitants of outlying villages. Nothing could possibly have demonstrated more clearly in recent times the total absence, on the part of the Chinese, of the organisation and discipline necessary in modern warfare, than the campaign conducted by the Chinese in Kansu. And yet for all particulars of that civil war we are indebted to the missionaries, the whole episode hardly obtaining a paragraph in the Western Press.

Whatever provocation there may have been for the original outbreaks in any, or all, of these cases, it was completely eclipsed by the atrocities of the insurgents; and the conclusion that the average man would probably arrive at in balancing the *pros*

and *cons* would be the very obvious one that the remedy was worse than the disease. Yet these scourges do serve a purpose—that of holding up to the authorities the risk of an uprising wherever there is misgovernment—a fear which weighs on all provincial officials, and imbues them with their guiding principle of action, peace-at-any-price.

The Chinese people, however, have other and less tragic methods of expressing themselves, and of maintaining democratic rights as against the aggressions of despotism. The most notorious are their secret societies. Some of these aim at revolution, as the great Triad Society (Heaven, Earth and Man), which seeks more "light" (ming); but, as "Ming" was also the appellation of the last native dynasty, Giles suggests that the word is used in the latter sense. It is not easy to get at the real objects or the actual working of this and other "secret" societies, else were the epithet a misnomer. They are proscribed by Government, and secrecy is maintained even as to membership. Some facts, however, are obtainable respecting them where large bodies of Chinese happen to settle in British or Dutch colonies. Even there, also, the Triads were at one time feared and proscribed by law; but for many years past they have been recognised, as trade unions have been in Great Britain; and perfectly good relations now subsist between them and the Colonial Governments of Hongkong and Singapore. Mr. W. A. Pickering, who, as Protector of Chinese in the

Straits Administration, had special opportunities of informing himself regarding the organisations of the brotherhood, has given many interesting particulars concerning them. Some account of the establishment of the Triad Society in 1674 is given in the introductions to its manuals, and in a sketch of the history of the society, since its creation, which Mr. Pickering had occasion to study. In its origin it was a purely political society, but it has in recent times become the refuge for doubtful characters, who use the organisation for their own purposes, lawless and otherwise—for prosecuting vendetta warfare, and so forth. The funds are raised by general subscription, levied chiefly upon the gambling establishments in the various districts, and the "lodges" or branches are in effect so many rival organisations.

Whatever the original aim of these societies, they have all wandered far from it, in the process of time and under changing circumstances, and they tend to become the mere tools of private schemers or the hobbies of busybodies and agitators. As the reason for their existence disappears, as is the case in British colonies, they become more and more degraded. But so long as the organisation is kept up, and the ritual is carried out, the society is ready to be put to any use which may tempt its leaders. In the meantime, while waiting for higher game, the wire-pullers busy themselves in plots to obstruct the execution of the laws, whether in China or in foreign countries where the Chinese congregate.

An initiatory ceremony in one of the lodges of Singapore was witnessed by Mr. Pickering, which lasted from 10 P.M. until three in the morning. Theoretically the meetings of the League are held in "the mountains," and new members, when asked where they were initiated, are instructed to reply, "In the mountains, for fear of the 'Cheng' officials." In the Straits the Grand Lodge has a superior building, where, twice a year, the "Five Ancestors" are worshipped, and feasts are held in their honour by the nine branches of the "Ghee Hin" Society. The office of Grand Master has fallen into abeyance, but each branch is managed by four office-bearers—the General Manager, a Master of Lodge, a "Van-guard," a "Red Bâton" or Executioner—and a varying number of Councillors and district head-men, who have to carry out orders.

The character of the society in the Straits is illustrated by an address made by the Grand Master of the Lodges in Mr. Pickering's presence:

"Many of our oaths and ceremonies are needless and obsolete, as, under the British Government, there is no necessity for some of the rules, and the laws of this country do not allow us to carry out others; the ritual is, however, retained for old custom's sake.

"The real benefits you will receive by joining our society are, that if 'outsiders' oppress you, or in case you get into trouble, on application to the head-men they will, in minor cases, take you to the Registrars of Secret Societies, the Inspector-General of Police, and the Protector of Chinese, who will certainly assist you to obtain redress; in serious cases, we will assist you towards procuring legal advice."

Mr. Pickering was informed by old office-bearers of the society that as late as 1840 the punishments of the League were inflicted without remission, and that, on one occasion, several strangers—"draughts of wind," as they are termed—were beheaded for merely being present at a secret meeting held in the jungle.

China is, *par excellence*, a country "honeycombed with secret societies," and with many which are not secret. What has been said about the Triad applies in the main to the "White Lily," the Ko-lao, and others, which give their attention to politics in their intervals of mummery. Some societies may be properly termed sects, seeing that they require a strict observance of certain rules of private conduct. Vegetarian societies are common, and the Tsai li sect, in northern China, which enjoins abstinence not only from animal food but from alcohol and narcotics, is said to number 200,000 members. Even these, however, on occasion play a political part, and an outbreak in Mongolia in 1891, which became an insurrection, originated in a misunderstanding between the Tsai li sect and the Catholic converts and priests,—a quarrel which had no relation to religion or morals but to purely mundane interests.

As a political agency it must be owned that the secret societies are not very efficacious in China; indeed of politics, as the term is used in Europe, the Chinese seem to have no conception. They only feel where the shoe pinches, and resent local injuries

by local weapons—such as mobbing a mandarin or lampooning him. The common vehicle for conveying the sense of the community is the placard, which Huc rightly calls "a very powerful organ of public opinion."

The great fact to be noted, as between the Chinese and their Government, is the almost unexampled liberty which the people enjoy, and the infinitesimally small part which Government plays in the scheme of national life. It is the more necessary to emphasise this, that a contrary opinion is not uncommon among those who are unacquainted with the country. The Chinese have perfect freedom of industry and trade, of locomotion, of amusement, and of religion, and whatever may be required for regulation or protection is not supplied by Act of Parliament or by any kind of Government interference, but by voluntary associations; of these the Government takes no cognisance, though it may sometimes come into collision with them—never to the disadvantage of the popular institution. Every trading interest has its own guild, which maintains order among the members, acting as a Court of Arbitration, and for breach of regulations enforcing penalties, which usually take the form of payment for a theatrical representation or a feast. When the local authorities propose to put a new or increased tax on merchandise, it is usually made the occasion for a conference and bargain between the parties; and when these cannot agree, the particular trade affected brings the officials

to terms by simply closing business until satisfaction is obtained. Foreign merchants also come occasionally into collision with the guilds, whose decisions in case of dispute sometimes appear to them arbitrary and unjust. But this notion may be attributed to the opposite points of view from which the question is approached by the respective parties, as has been noted in a previous chapter. But it would appear that experience renders the foreign commercial bodies more tolerant of the Chinese guilds, as the Colonial Governments become more tolerant of the Triad Society; and in several instances the local guilds have even been appealed to by Chambers of Commerce in a fair and friendly spirit.

Thus, in all practical matters—politics not being considered such—the Chinese genius for association has the freest play and achieves most useful results. So thoroughly national, or racial, is the institution, that individual isolation is unknown. Nobody stands alone, says Huc; and no commercial firm or bank stands alone. The system of association here fits in with the principle of linked responsibility, and provides a guaranty most valuable for business. As the London bankers came to the rescue of Barings, so do the Chinese sometimes unite to support a member of the guild. In the case of bankers, indeed, the guaranty is in constant action, all those who belong to the inner circle being strictly bound to aid each other in emergency, and prevent catastrophe. This makes it virtually impossible for a

bank of the first class to fail, except by some flagrant breach of propriety.

Benefit and tontine societies of all sorts abound throughout the country—anti-gambling societies, associations for protection from thieves, associations of girls who forswear marriage and agree to take poison rather than be forced into that "honourable estate," vigilance committees, and hundreds of others. In a word, the country is full of societies of every kind, which fill up a very important space in the life of the Chinese people.

Even the poor, as Huc tells us,

"are formed into companies, regiments, and battalions, and this great army of paupers has a chief, who bears the title of 'King of the Beggars,' and who is actually recognised by the State. He is responsible for the conduct of his tattered subjects, and it is on him the blame is laid when any disorders occur among them that are too outrageous and dangerous to public peace to be endured. The 'King of the Beggars' at Peking is a real power. . . . Whilst they swarm about like some devastating insects, and seek by their insolence to intimidate every one they meet, their King calls a meeting of the principal inhabitants, and proposes, for a certain sum, to deliver them from the hideous invasion. After a long dispute, the contracting parties come to an agreement, the village pays its ransom, and the beggars decamp, to go and pour down like an avalanche upon some other place."

Doolittle explains the diplomacy of the "King," who is enriched by the industry of his subjects:

"A head man of the beggars may make an agreement with the shopkeepers, merchants, and bankers within his district, that beggars shall not visit their shops, warehouses, and banks for money for a stipulated time, and the beggars are obliged to conform to the agreement. Religious mendicants or refugees from

other provinces do not come under these regulations. The head man receives from each of the principal business firms with which he comes to an agreement a sum of money, from a few to ten or twenty dollars per annum, as the price of exemption from the importunities of beggars, and in proof of the agreement he gives a strip of red paper on which is written or printed: *The brethren must not come here to disturb or annoy.*"

The beggars, in their rags and loathsomeness, are unpleasant objects, but they know that however aggressive they may be, even to pawing a smart foreigner with their scaly fingers, they are immune from chastisement, and they naturally presume on their immunity. They may be abused with the full artillery of Chinese objurgations, but that makes no impression on them. Yet even they are ruled by etiquette, and have their professional code, like all other sections of society. They must not call at private houses, except on certain special occasions of mourning or festivity, but that privilege may be also compounded for by a covenant between the head of the family and the chief of the beggars. The roadside is always free to them, and visitors to Peking know how the main approaches to the city are lined with the whining fraternity. They are sometimes really enterprising, and Doolittle relates the circumstance of the burial of a native Christian in Fuchau, when "a company of beggars and of lepers gathered round the grave and demanded 20,000 cash as the condition of allowing the coffin to be lowered. One of the rabble actually got down into the grave, and thus prevented the lowering of the coffin." They eventually compromised for 800 cash.

Nor does the faculty of association end with the Beggar Guild. The thieves are also organised, and have their codes of honour, more elaborate than Dick Turpin's. There are certain matters in which ignorance is more affected than knowledge, at least by the respectable Chinese, and no one of them can be found to boast of his acquaintance with the articles of association of the fraternity of thieves, but these are known by their fruits. Even foreigners, who know so little of the real life of the Chinese, have observed some curious phenomena in connection with their own residence in China. It is customary to keep a doorkeeper and a night-watchman. The duty of the latter is to jog round the premises at long intervals, beating the watches on a rattle or gong; then he subsides into the sleep of the man who has done his duty, for half an hour or an hour as the case may be. Every opportunity and encouragement is thus offered to the housebreaker, but he does not take advantage of it. Let the householder, however, seeing—what is perfectly evident—that his watchman does not "watch," only part with that functionary, and then it is ten to one if the burglar does not promptly make his presence felt. A blind and deaf old dotard may prove an economical form of insurance!

The potency of the Thief Guild is felt in many ways. In the north of China, for example, highway robbery is not unknown; indeed, is sometimes alarmingly prevalent. But there is a valuable

traffic on wheels, a very slow traffic, over exceedingly bad roads, most favourable for attack. Between Peking and Tientsin, in particular, there is a constant exchange of silver bullion for gold, and large amounts of treasure are conveyed on Government and mercantile account. The conveyance is the common travelling cart of the country, the custodian an ill-paid driver. There may sometimes be an extra man, with a rusty spear or an antiquated musket, riding on the shaft of the cart. But no harm ever comes to those expeditions of the precious metals. Whence comes their security? The livery stable, or "cart company," which undertakes the conveyance, makes none of those exceptions to its liability about "acts of God" and "Queen's enemies," and a host of other matters, which make the modern bill of lading such a voluminous document. The Chinaman undertakes absolutely to deliver the treasure. He guarantees it against all accidents whatever; and the remarkable feature in the transaction is that, for the transport, including plenary insurance, the charge is ridiculously small—not a per "centage" but a per "milleage" on the value. Yet the business is remunerative, the owners of carts and mules prosper, and are men of substance sufficient to make good any loss that may be brought home to them. But evidently *they* make no losses. Out of their fractional charge they no doubt spare a trifle for some occult personage, as one would pay to gain the favour of the King of the Fairies, and thus all

the world is content. Weird stories are sometimes heard of the diplomacy of the King of the Thieves, and the efficacy of a dingy little flag to protect untold wealth in silver and gold, but it is a subject on which it is precisely those who know the most who have the least to say.

It is only fitful glimpses which strangers are able to obtain of the inner working of Chinese national life—quite insufficient to form a coherent theory of the whole, except by supplementing what is known by inferences drawn as to the mass which remains unknown. But the data ascertained seem sufficient to warrant the inference of a vast, self-governed, law-abiding society, costing practically nothing to maintain, and having nothing to apprehend save natural calamities and national upheavals. Perhaps the least understood feature in the Chinese democracy is the sentiment by which the innumerable societies are held together, and by which, in fact, the whole scheme of self-government is sustained. That is a proposition which is, *primâ facie*, contradictory of many observed facts; it is opposed to the common opinion which has been so well illustrated by Arthur H. Smith, in his chapter on the "Absence of Altruism"; yet it is established on no less incontrovertible evidence than this, that the principle of self-sacrifice is an essential element in the preservation of Chinese social institutions. It is often cited as an example of Chinese eccentricity that a substitute may be hired to undergo capital punishment. But if we consider the number of occasions on which

self-immolation is practised to gain an object, we can hardly dispose of them all as eccentric freaks. They proceed from some principle which we do not as yet understand. Suicide, which is penal under English law, is meritorious in China. The sacrifice of a widow on her husband's demise, whether by hanging, poisoning, or drowning, still exists, and such widows receive posthumous honours. The devotion of a daughter who, in despair of other remedy, gives her sick father her own flesh to eat, is always highly commended in the *Peking Gazette.* To be avenged on his adversary, a man will commit suicide on his enemy's threshold. It is related of Cheo and Chang, leaders of a riot in Ningpo to reduce taxation, that they surrendered themselves to certain death—although they defeated the Government forces—in order to gain their object and put an end to the contest without the further shedding of blood. And so we find, running like a thread through the complicated web of Chinese social life, a constant readiness to die when the need arises, and one cannot but consider this an element of strength and stability in the Chinese nation, especially if we regard this spirit of sacrifice in its relation to the family cult, which is to the Chinese the realisation of immortality.

CHAPTER XII

HONGKONG

The present moment is a fitting one to survey the history and consider the characteristics of Hongkong, and to note the lessons contained therein. Hongkong is usually regarded as merely a fine port, through which passes yearly an immense amount of shipping, and which has a vast distributing commerce; in fact, it is looked upon as a vast *entrepôt* of trade. Steamship lines, it is known, place the island in direct communication with Great Britain, Australasia and Vancouver; and also with Japan, Tongking, the Straits, Siam, the Philippines, Corea and China—in fact, with the entire field of the Far East. But Hongkong is something more than a mere *entrepôt* of trade. From the very first, there was never any intention of creating a colony there. Besides an emporium of commerce, it was meant to be a *place d'armes*. "We occupy Hongkong," said Lord Derby at the time of its cession to England, "not with the object of colonising, but of using it from a commercial and military point of view." The island was chosen not without the fullest consideration as to the most suitable position for occupation on the China coast. The advantages

of Chusan, amongst other places, had been fully weighed, as evidently commanding a more central position; but the situation of Hongkong with reference to Canton, then the great trading city of China, decided the question, for considerations of trade were then not merely of greater importance than they now are, but were paramount.

Though officially classed as one of the Crown colonies,* Hongkong is not a colony in which the British race is perpetuated, as in Australasia for instance. It is not even a settlement with resources of its own, but merely a station, partly military, partly commercial, deriving its sole importance from the trade passing through its port. There is much to admire, much to marvel at, in the magnificent commerce which has been built up on a barren rock—a mere dot in the China Sea; and the place affords a great object-lesson as to what can be achieved by the Chinese under the guidance and rule of a Western Power. It is, in fact, a Chinese colony under the auspices of the British Govern-

* British colonies have been divided into three categories: 1. Crown colonies, such as Ceylon, which are subject to the control of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and to which the Home Government supplies laws and officials. 2. Colonies, such as Barbadoes, which possess representative institutions, but not a responsible Government, the Home Government reserving the right of vetoing legislative measures and of appointing public functionaries. 3. Colonies, such as Canada, which have both representative institutions and a responsible Government which fills up all appointments, the Home Government merely reserving the right (rarely exercised) of vetoing legislative measures and of nominating the Governor.

ment, and a colony, too, so close to the coast of China and to Canton—the chief commercial city of the Empire—as to almost form part of the mainland itself. In the Straits Settlements, in Labuan, in North Borneo, and in Burma, there are large and increasing Chinese communities, as there are also in Australia, British Columbia, and other British colonies. But it is only in Hongkong that a purely Chinese population is found living under the British rule, and that Britain finds herself in direct relation with China. If any lesson is to be learned from the history of Hongkong, it is the clear indication afforded of what can be accomplished in China itself when the great resources of that country come to be developed by the Western Powers.

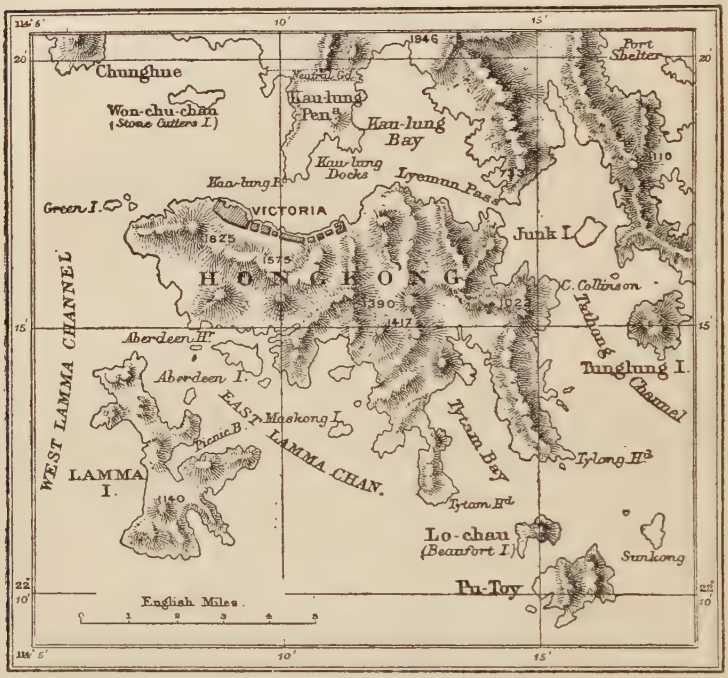
The island of Hongkong, one of a scattered group known as the Ladrones, situated at the mouth of the Canton River, stands at the base of a sector embracing in its curve Yokohama, Shanghai, Singapore, Java, and Australia. It is the end of the chain of British dependencies dotting the south coast of Asia, of which Singapore is a powerful link, and is the easternmost post in the circle of British possessions, divided by the Pacific Ocean from the extreme western point, Vancouver Island. It occupies a unique position, therefore, with regard to China and Japan, and, situated as it is, must take a leading part in the development of the Pacific, where history is being rapidly made. The Pacific must occupy an increasingly important position in the evolution of the world's history. Not

merely the leading countries of Europe, but also the United States, have entered upon a struggle to obtain the control of countries adjacent to this ocean, and of the neighbouring islands. In this shifting of the balance of power, in this commercial and political contest, and in the working out of the destinies of the Far East, Hongkong, the pivot of British operations in that part of the world, will play no unimportant part.

The history of a place like Hongkong is a curious study. The European population is constantly changing, for foreigners remain as short a period as possible: they come to make a fortune or competency, and then return to the mother-country. It is this continual change of local leaders which makes it so difficult to trace any distinct evolution of local, as distinguished from imperial, policy. The same mistakes, the same criticisms, the same apprehensions, recur again and again ; the experiences of those who have left the place being too rapidly lost sight of.

The proximity of Hongkong to China, and the fact that the colony includes a promontory of the mainland, creates special difficulties as regards the maintenance of law and order. Owing to its position, Hongkong may be regarded as a mere suburb of Canton, not only the richest and most populous, but also one of the most disorderly cities of the Chinese Empire. It has always been a favourite resort for the criminal classes of the Canton province, and is the starting-point for the Chinese

emigrants, men from the southern provinces, on their way to Western lands. Special ordinances have, therefore, been enforced from time to time to check the influx of criminals, to prevent the undue influence of the secret societies, and to ensure that



MAP OF HONGKONG.

coolie emigration does not reproduce, as it has a strong tendency to do, the evils of the slave trade.

Many are the vicissitudes, in the early years, of a place like Hongkong, with the early enthusiasm followed by intense depression; the strenuous efforts

succeeded by intervals of inactivity; and, finally, the revival of enthusiasm and the establishment of solid prosperity.

In its infancy Hongkong failed to attract the better class of Chinese, and was an Alsatia, seemingly of the most pronounced description. It is recorded that only one Chinaman of any respectability ventured to Hongkong at that time, after a few months returning to his native place, Canton. The authorities on the mainland did all they could to prevent Chinese settling on the island. "The island of Hongkong," said an English official in 1841, "will probably become the favourite resort of the smugglers and debauchees of that quarter of the globe," and the forecast was fulfilled to the letter. Opium-dens, gaming-houses, and other places still worse, flourished.

At one time, in 1849, the fortunes of the place were at a very low ebb; indeed, it seemed to be doomed. The cost of administration had risen to as much as £250,000 annually, while the receipts did not exceed £12,000, and at the same time the trend of Chinese trade was towards Shanghai, which was rapidly developing. The business transacted with the open ports by European countries was then distributed as follows:

I. Canton:	British imports . . .	£1,646,000
	Exports	2,300,000

(Figures referring to the business of other Powers, which was altogether insignificant, are not to be had.)

II. Amoy:	Imports	£1,496,000
	Exports	277,006

Shanghai: British imports . . .	£ 974,000
Those of other countries .	1,209,000
British exports . . .	1,438,000
Those of other countries .	1,754,000

The abandonment of the colony was recommended from many quarters, especially by Montgomery Martin, then an authority on colonial questions, who led a fierce attack in England on the Home Government. It was admitted that it would have been better never to have gone there.

"If it could have been foreseen," wrote Lord Grey, Secretary of State for the Colonies in Lord John Russell's Administration, "what the total expenses would amount to, and what limited advantages this place would possess for our trade, it would not have been thought worth while to occupy it. But that had already been done long before our Administration was formed; it only remained for us to endeavour to diminish the cost of an establishment which had been instituted on a scale worthy of the supposed importance of Hongkong, at a time when it was confidently expected that it would become the great emporium of the trade with China. In 1846 it had already become evident that this would not be the case, and that the greater portion of our commerce would pass through the ports into which our merchants are admitted."*

One of Martin's chapters was actually headed "Hongkong, its position, prospects, character, and utter worthlessness in every point of view to England." Fortunately, Hongkong was not abandoned. Works were systematically carried out gradually, rendering the malarious climate less unhealthy; the Chinese of the better class were drawn

* "The Colonial Policy of Lord John Russell's Administration" (2 vols 8vo. London: R. Bentley. 1853). Second edition, p. 265.

to the place; and the erstwhile deserted port and settlement became, step by step, more flourishing, and showed signs of becoming what it is to-day, one of the most prosperous spots in the world.

It is hard to believe that so much can have been accomplished in so short a time. The granite *praya*, or esplanade, the public buildings, the merchant houses and wharves, the harbour crowded with steamers and craft of all kinds—all these denote affluence and activity; while the public gardens, and the successful system of afforestation which has covered the once bare hills with timber, have worked a complete transformation in the appearance of the place.

To-day Victoria, lying on the north of the island at the foot of a high range of hills, is a city of closely built houses stretching for some four miles along the island shore, and rising, tier over tier, up the slopes of the mountain; while on the shore of the opposite peninsula (Kaulung), until recently an uninhabited waste of undulating red rock, are now seen a mass of buildings and docks, great warehouses, and other accompaniments of a prosperous city. In the Kaulung warehouses may be seen merchandise worth over half a million sterling. Of the several docks, one is constructed entirely of granite, and can take, with a few exceptions, the largest vessels now afloat. The silent and deserted basin has become a harbour covered with shipping, a sight hardly to be matched in the whole world. The shipping entering and clearing the port in 1897

amounted to over 17,000,000 tons, the tonnage returns showing it to be the third port of the British Empire and probably of the world. The aggregate burthen of shipping is greater than that of the four leading Australian colonies. At anchor may be often seen as many as fifty ocean steamers, including ships of war; large European and American sailing vessels, and hundreds of sea-going junks; while in the harbour are many thousand boats, containing mostly a floating population, with more than a hundred steam launches, for which Hongkong is famous.

In an interesting account of Hongkong written some years ago by Sir W. des Vœux, he said there might be seen

"Long lines of quays and wharves, large warehouses teeming with merchandise, shops stocked with all the luxuries, as well as the needs of two civilisations; in the European quarter a fine Town Hall, stately banks, and other large buildings of stone; in the Chinese quarters houses, constructed after a pattern peculiar to China, of almost equally solid materials, but packed so closely together and thronged so densely as to be in this respect probably without parallel in the world (100,000 people live within a certain district not exceeding half a square mile in area), and finally streets stretching for miles, abounding with carriages (drawn for the most part not by animals but by men), and teeming with a busy population, in the centre of the town chiefly European, but towards the west and east almost exclusively Chinese."

Higher up are found churches, public buildings, and many houses of European design, generally detached, and fronted with stone arched verandahs.

"Hongkong has indeed changed its aspect; and when it is remembered that all this has been effected in her Majesty's reign and indeed during a space of less than fifty years on ground in immediate contact with the most populous Empire in the world, by a comparatively infinitesimal number of an entirely alien race separated from their homes by nearly the whole earth, and, unlike their countrymen in Australia and Canada, living in an enervating and trying climate; and when it is further remembered that the Chinese, whose labour and enterprise under British auspices have largely assisted in this development, have been under no compulsion, but have come here as free men, attracted by liberal institutions, equitable treatment, and the justice of our rule; when all this is taken into account, it may be doubted whether the evidences of material and moral achievement, presented as it were in a focus, make anywhere a more forcible appeal to eye and imagination, and whether any other spot on earth is thus more likely to excite, or much more fully justifies, pride in the name of Englishman." *

The climate of Hongkong has always been a great drawback to the place, and the mortality in the early years of the occupation was something terrible, especially amongst the troops. The malignant fever of the early days, however, was alleged to be due to the upturning of the soil (a disintegrated granite). Of late years Hongkong has again been afflicted, this time by the bubonic plague, which is said to have spread to the island from the mainland. This disease, the mortality of which is appalling, has proved a severe strain on the resources of the colony. In the early period of our possession the climate of the lower valleys was so bad that

* Report on the Condition and Prospects of Hongkong, by H. E. Sir G. William des Vœux, Governor, &c. Hongkong, October 31, 1889.

"abandon hope" might have been written up over the barrack gateway. Not ten men of the 59th Regiment remained of those who eight years before had landed there, and the place acquired the name of "The White Man's Grave." It was intended at one time to move the colony to the higher ground, so as to avoid the dangerous fever common amongst the troops and settlers, a step that was strongly recommended by Sir Henry Pottinger. But the moving of a colony, even at an early stage of its existence, proved an impossible task.

During the summer months, from April to September inclusive, when the south-west monsoon prevails, the heat and rain are great, and Victoria loses the benefit of the wind. From October to April the north-east monsoon prevails, little rain falls. The air is cool and bracing, fires being in common use until the end of February. The temperature varies from about 40° to 90°, the coolest month being January and the hottest August. The average annual rainfall is about eighty inches, mainly contributed by the summer months. From time to time Hongkong is visited, usually about the date of the autumn equinox, by typhoons, which work havoc among the shipping in the harbour and occasionally among the buildings on the land.

Smuggling still exists, though it has been reduced to small dimensions, and there have been recently but few acts of piracy. A proportion of the police force finds its duties on the water, scouring the harbour waters in swift police launches and pinnaces. The

natives of the islands and of the mainland, whose shallow creeks afford safe refuge for light craft, have always been in complete sympathy with the smugglers; in fact, every one in the earlier days, from the highest mandarin to the lowest in rank, was banded together by mutual self-interest and by sentiment to oppose the suppression of the pirates. That grave difficulties occurred in putting down piracy is not to be wondered at when we recollect the great obstacles encountered in suppressing brigandage wherever the authority enforcing order is in the hands of the countrymen of the people of the district. The pirates were so successful that they scoured the sea in fleets, carrying guns and attacking steamers.

Special measures and organised expeditions, systematically carried out, and the development of communications and commerce, have combined to put an end to piracy. The Chinese officials, even, have found it politic and profitable no longer to protect the evil-doers. As recently as 1885, however, a British steamer, the *Greyhound*, was captured by pirates, who had embarked as passengers, within sixty miles of Hongkong. And again, in 1887, three piratical attacks were made within a week. In 1890 the steamer *Namoa* was captured under circumstances which created a great sensation in China.*

* The *Namoa* left Hongkong on December 10, 1890, having on board two hundred and twenty Chinese deck passengers, emigrants returning to China with the savings they had accumulated at

The success of British rule over Asiatics is nowhere better exemplified than in Hongkong, where, as in the Straits, or Rangoon, the Chinaman has proved himself to be most successful as a colonist, trader and merchant. Beginning usually without any means, often as a mere coolie, he starts life as a pedlar, or in the smallest of booths or shops. He gradually makes his way, the shop becomes larger and the operations more extensive. Some join European firms, in which they are most useful, sometimes indispensable; and, by indomitable industry, business capacity, and daring ventures—and it must be understood that there is in the world no more determined speculator than the Chinaman—they rise to the position of wealthy men, perhaps of merchant princes. Much more than apparent is his success, for, caring less for the external appearance than for the solid reality, he is content to remain in the background. The Chinese merchant, by reason of his shrewdness, perseverance, ability and honesty, stands very high in the commercial world, and is the most formidable rival of the Anglo-Saxon race. In the colony of Hongkong most of the wealth is in the hands of the Chinese, and in all the chief business houses and financial institutions the Chinese hold positions of great responsibility.

In 1849 thousands of Chinese poured into Hong-

Singapore. At a given signal some fifty of them, clothed in a kind of uniform, rushed upon the crew and the ship's officers, wounded them, and seized the vessel and everything of value. It was not until some time later that the Chinese authorities discovered their whereabouts, and took them prisoners.

kong, to procure employment in America in the gold mines, through English intermediary. Thus was established an exceedingly profitable industry —the transport of coolies—which helped to turn the fortunes of the colony. This transport system soon attained large dimensions. The earlier emigration to Singapore, Peru, and the Antilles was now augmented by a greater volume to California, at that time isolated from the Eastern States of the Union. Australia, too, was a great field for labour. No people accommodate themselves to the idea of expatriation more readily than the Chinese—but always with repatriation in view. All countries, all climates, all surroundings seem to suit them; they adapt themselves to any circumstances, and are to be seen in many quarters of the world. There is no colonist in existence like the Chinaman. He is equally at home in Siberia or the Philippines, in Burma or India, in Central America or Canada. To those countries that will receive them the Chinese are ever ready to go, even to such a death-trap as Panama proved to be.

The chief features, then, in the progress of Hongkong seem to be the following:

The emigration of the Chinese through Hongkong, first to America and Australia, and later to the Malay Peninsula and the Pacific Islands, which has led to a large increase of business generally, and to the establishment of regular lines of steamers to America and Australia; the unforeseen circum-

stance of the Taiping rebellion, which threatened southern China, compelling the leading Chinese traders to seek refuge in the English colony; the opening of the Suez Canal, which gave an immense impulse to the Far Eastern trade; and, generally, the increasing willingness of the Chinese to settle in an English colony, after experience of the justice to be obtained under British rule.

How to attract colonists and, still more, how to retain them, is a most complicated and interesting problem. That the British do not seem to be apprehensive of the success accomplished by the Chinese in places like the Straits or Rangoon is a matter of constant surprise to our Continental neighbours, especially the French, who do not understand that our treatment of the Chinese is really a matter of general policy, and that nowhere has our dealing with Asiatics been more successful than in China. The English are aware that, while the Chinese could accomplish nothing without them, on the other hand they themselves could accomplish nothing without the Chinese: they are mutually necessary. The policy of encouraging the Chinese, under a liberal yet firm administration, has been eminently satisfactory, and has succeeded in inspiring the Chinese with confidence in English rule. The system of government and administration may not contain anything to specially excite admiration, as has been pointed out by French writers, and any French legislator might be competent to devise an equally well-arranged and no doubt more logical

and more methodical form of administration—on paper. But, then, it would be on paper only. The essential differences, in fact, between the English and French systems are well illustrated in

English colonies like Hongkong and Singapore on the one hand, and Tongking and Cochin-China on the other. The English begin in a loose and rough-and-ready fashion, adapting themselves to circumstances as they arise; the French commence with a complete code, from which they permit no

divergence, and endeavour to make the circumstances fit the code.

Since the above account of Hongkong was written, a considerable extension has been made to the colony. A Convention was signed on the 9th of June 1898, between Great Britain and China, under which a lease for ninety-nine years has been granted to the former of the territory on the mainland opposite Victoria, and of the adjacent islands and waters as far as Deep Bay on the west and Mirs Bay on the east, China retaining its jurisdiction in the native city of Kaulung, and the right to use the waters for her ships. The total area leased, including the waters, amounts to about two hundred square miles. It is hoped that this extension will enable the colony to be more securely defended, and will aid its commercial development and industrial expansion. Now that Hongkong is brought closer than ever to Canton, it is to be hoped that the long-talked-of railway between that city and Kaulung will be no longer delayed.

Such as I have briefly described it is the Hongkong of to-day, after little more than fifty years of British rule.

CHAPTER XIII

THE POLITICAL QUESTION

THIRTEEN years ago I predicted that the Franco-Chinese War had opened a new chapter of international history which it was safe to presume was not in the contemplation of either party to the struggle, and thus I described the situation :

"What was sure to happen some day in the ordinary course of commercial and colonial development has been accelerated by the French proceedings in Tonquin and China, and by the movements of Russia—the shifting of the political centre of gravity, the opening of a new and larger Eastern question, and the resumption in the Pacific of the struggle for pre-eminence which was carried on a century ago in the Atlantic. It is inevitable that the question of supremacy in Asia will be shortly decided in favour of one or other of the Powers, Russia or Britain. In the coming strife England must in spite of herself play a leading part, since the material interests of the British Empire are by far the heaviest stake in the game. It is even probable that the fate of the Empire itself may be eventually decided in the Eastern seas. It is therefore a question that concerns all Englishmen in the mother-country and India and the colonies, and, indeed, all English-speaking people throughout the world, whether English statesmen will rise to the occasion, bringing courage, faith, and intelligence to bear on the direction of affairs, whether they will instruct the people in their true interests and responsibilities, teach them the vital importance of foreign affairs and national defence, or whether, calling upon the people to centre their

attention on drastic semi-socialistic 'reforms,' in a lukewarm, vacillating, and cowardly spirit they will continue as of late years to embroil England and humble her before the nations, and finally cause her to drop out of the rank of Great Powers."

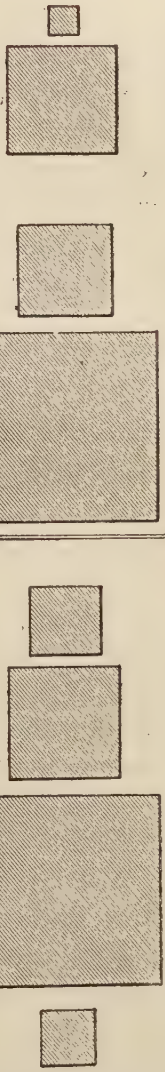
The years that have elapsed since this was written have not rendered these propositions obsolete.

That Britain is an Asiatic Power is a truism. But how little realised by our countrymen! England's Asiatic dominions and dependencies cover more than 1,600,000 square miles. She has nearly 300,000,000 of souls under her rule, speaking some twenty languages. Her European military strength in Asia is 75,000 men, with 150,000 native auxiliaries, while her naval force, thanks to recent reinforcements, is stronger than that of any other single Power, excepting Japan.* She has 21,000 miles of railway and 47,000 miles of telegraph on land in Asia, and some 20,000 miles of submarine cable. She has invested in her territories, either in State loans or railways under the State, over £250,000,000, besides scores of millions sterling invested in private enterprise—agricultural, commercial, industrial—which cannot be exactly estimated. The foreign trade of these territories is more than £160,000,000 annually. The trade of other Asiatic countries with Europe is over £60,000,000, of which four-fifths is English, while

* The normal strength is: one first-class battle-ship, four first-class cruisers, four second-class cruisers, two third-class cruisers, eight first-class gunboats, three torpedo-destroyers, and some gunboats for river service. Two first-class battle-ships and a first-class cruiser have lately been added.

COMPARISON OF AREAS AND POPULATIONS

	Area in Europe
England	121,000 Square miles
Russia	2,095,000 „
	Area in Asia
England	1,617,000 „
Russia	6,575,000 „
	Population in Europe
England	38,000,000
Russia	106,000,000
	Population in Asia
England	292,000,000
Russia	23,000,000



COMPARISON OF AREAS AND POPULATIONS OF ENGLAND AND RUSSIA IN EUROPE AND ASIA.

an enormous coasting trade, growing yearly with giant strides, is mainly in our hands. The trade between Eastern Asia and our Australian colonies, still in its infancy, is increasing and has a great future before it.

But the point to which attention should be directed is the unique position occupied by China and the Far East in the whole range of trade fields. The British share of China's total foreign trade is above eighty per cent., or more than £32,000,000 per annum; while British trade with the Straits Settlements, Siam, China, Corea, the Philippines, Japan, and Hongkong combined exceeds £130,000,000 per annum. The British capital invested in the Far East is computed by the best authorities to run into several hundred millions sterling. And this on a field for the greater part unopened and capable of indefinite expansion! These facts should be inscribed on the walls of every schoolroom and every politician's study throughout the country.

The Asiatic dominions or dependencies of Russia, measured by area, are close upon four times as great as our own, and contain over 6,000,000 square miles, but they have only a population of some 13,000,000—*not one-thirteenth of our Asiatic population*—scattered over this enormous region, which in economic wealth is extremely poor compared with our own. It is these simple facts which make the rapid advance of Russia towards India and China in the present generation so significant. From the shores of the Caspian as her base she

has, at enormous sacrifice of life and treasure, thrown forward a vast network of communications through Central Asia towards India, whilst in Siberia and the Amur region she is making great efforts not merely to consolidate herself and to perfect the communications between the Pacific and European Russia, but to reach China's eighteen provinces. She is every year occupying a stronger position, from which she can put in practice her policy of pressure upon India and China, and thus gain what she first wants—strategic positions inland and on the seaboard in the East and West. The completion of the Siberian Railway and its branches will mark a most important epoch in her advance. Her trade with Eastern Asia, consisting almost entirely of tea from China, is altogether insignificant.

The force which is constantly, silently, at work in this Eastern question—this *Drang nach Osten*—the factor which can always be reckoned on with certainty, is the irrepressible but natural ambition of Russia, which impels her incessantly from the Arctic frosts towards the open sea, the rich plains and the vast populations of Asia—a movement which presses on Turkey, on India and on China, and in a minor degree on Persia, in a continuous line of front extending 7600 geographical miles right across Asia,—from the Bosphorus to the Yellow Sea. There is no need to trace here the history of the Russian advance across the barren and thinly-populated wastes of Central Asia and Siberia; enough to bear in mind that she is now on the frontiers of India and China, the

objectives of the movement—objectives in a sense that will appear later. Obstacles may retard, but centuries do not change that movement.

Russia obeys a law of sunward and seaward gravitation, accelerated by the ambitions of her statesmen and officials, and resulting in a course of development which must progress until it encounters the opposition of a nation stronger and better than herself.* Hers is not the case of an over-populated country throwing off its surplus population. She is engaged on a purely political and military conquest, which, after enormous expenditure, has already placed her in an advantageous position for influencing, for menacing, and perhaps even attacking, one, if not both, of the two richest and most populous countries in Asia,—one already belonging to us and the other the chief trading field yet open to our energies. She means eventually to build up a commerce, but the seaboard and ports she wants in the first instance for strategic purposes.

Russia is bordered in Central Asia by soft organisms, countries without military knowledge, without roads or railroads, almost without govern-

* In reply to the inquiry as to where the aggression of Russia is to stop, Sir D. Mackenzie Wallace says: "Russia must push forward her frontier until she reaches a country possessing a government which is able and willing to keep order within its boundaries, and to prevent its subjects from committing depredations on their neighbours." ("Russia," p. 596.) But China keeps order within her boundaries. My contention is that Russia will move forward until she encounters, in place of a soft organism, a *hard* one, which should be England.

ment; and, following the law of nature, she absorbs them one after the other. She has nearly destroyed Turkey, has devoured and digested, at no slow rate, the effete Central Asian States well within her reach; and, if permitted, she will devour the whole of China, bit by bit, as she can digest them. The duty of Britain is to preserve Afghanistan and Persia, and, above all, China — and this at all hazards.

The Mongol Empire once included Russia, and extended from the Pacific to Germany, and from the Arctic to the Indian Ocean. It fell to pieces through want of organisation. Russia rose and is rising from its ruins. The advantages possessed by Russia arise chiefly from her geographical position and from a certain affinity of race. By her advance she menaces Britain's power in Asia, whilst the extension of the British Empire from India does not menace Russia, though it doubtless interferes with her ambitions.

The Trans-Siberian Railway and its branches will be one of the chief factors in shifting the centre of gravity of the world's trade. Its effects seem to be viewed with complacency on our part, because it is thought the existing trade with China will not be greatly diverted. Considerable changes, however, must from the first result, though slowly and imperceptibly. The eventual effect will be colossal, for the railway will open up enormous undeveloped regions, and will give facilities for the conveyance of passengers, correspondence, and the lighter class

of goods; a most important matter when it is a question of connecting within a fortnight's time the capitals of Europe with those of China, Japan and Corea—countries with a population of four hundred millions, one-third the world's total. A great portion of the eastern section of the line will pass through a splendid country,—Manchuria,—a white man's country, and full of valuable resources.

French interests in Asia consist of her possessions —Cochin-China, covering an area of 22,000 square miles, with a population of 1,800,000; Cambodia, 62,000 square miles, and a population of 1,000,000; Annan (including Tongking), 250,000 square miles, with a population of about 20,000,000; in all a population of some 23,000,000. The total trade represents merely something under £10,000,000 sterling annually, of which a considerable amount is in British hands. But if France has little trade she has aspirations, aims—an idea.

The ambition of France, though continuous in intention, is spasmodic and incoherent in action. Its motive is political and antagonistic, not commercial and peaceful. Commerce is merely the stalking-horse. Her population is stationary, her finances are in an unsatisfactory condition. She has no colonies that are "white man's" lands. Her military occupation has everywhere been a failure, except perhaps in Algeria, where she has a base close by, in Marseilles. The view generally held is that Frenchmen cannot colonise. But when one considers the marvellous success obtained by France under the old colonial

methods, by which she gained so many magnificent possessions, rendering it doubtful, even in the eighteenth century, whether France or Britain would prove to be the colonising nation of the world, it must be admitted that France has been in the past, if she is no longer to-day, capable of colonial work. It would seem that, in the great upheaval at the latter end of the century, the old colonial system, which had been built up under the former *régime*, was lost. The colonial genius of France disappeared and left nothing in its place. Englishmen are too apt nowadays to think of themselves as the only colonising people. One has only to think of what was accomplished under the great Minister Colbert, and by Frenchmen like Dupleix and Labordonnais in India, by Champlain and Montcalm in Canada, to recognise that even England has never produced the superiors of these men.* In some respects the French have proved themselves well suited for colonising. They have never been found wanting in enterprise or in fighting qualities. Their past history, in the East and West alike, proves that, unlike the Spaniards, they did not degenerate into intermarrying with Indians and adopting native ways and modes of

* Elle (la France) ne vit dans le Canada, comme, hélas ! Voltaire lui-même, que "des arpents de neige." Elle perdit la Louisianie aussi gaiement qu'elle avait perdu l'Inde. En cette même année 1763, le grand homme qui avait devancé l'Angleterre dans la conquête de l'empire des Indes, Dupleix, mourait à Paris pauvre et surtout impopulaire. — *Le Tonkin et la Mère-Patrie*, JULES FERRY.

life. Their leaders showed a definite policy in dealing with native races: they organised them, formed alliances and counter-alliances, and carried the spirit of European politics into Asia and America.

But they have not the power of adapting themselves to new peoples and to new countries. They will not go abroad to the Far East as colonists or even as traders; nor is this specially to be wondered at, seeing that France has no overflow population such as other countries have. Still, she will, however dangerous we think it may prove to herself, elect to play a prominent part in this Eastern struggle, as Gambetta and Skobeleff contemplated, and as under Ferry she was inclined to do. Tongking has a rich delta, but is for the most part jungle-covered hill country, and is unhealthy and uninhabitable for French settlers or traders. France administers the government with a great yearly deficit, merely for the benefit of—excepting a multitude of *fonctionnaires*—natives and strangers, more especially the traders of southern China.

Recruited at random, the French colonial officials are seldom either competent or trustworthy. Perhaps one out of ten may be reliable and efficient. The majority of these colonial officials, according to Chailley-Bert, set about the work of governing by bringing with them that passion for uniformity, that mania for routine, that love for making regulations, that dread of initiative and of responsibility, which crush the mother-country as well as the most vigorous of her colonies. The French codes are

applied without change in every quarter of the world, and in the modern Eastern possessions exactly as they were in the old colonies of France. The cost of administration is enormous and out of all proportion to the work accomplished, the establishment charges being invariably heavier than the cost of the public works themselves. The consequence is that the sole advantage that the West can give to the East, as a distinct advance in civilisation, and the sole means which can make colonies prosperous —communications, roads, railways, canals, ports, hospitals, schools, in fact all the machinery of modern Western progress—are wanting. Some years ago a caricature appeared in a colonial French journal which represented not inaccurately the whole French colonial system. An Annamite workman, in not too vigorous a fashion, was moving a few bricks to place upon a wall, and his work was being superintended by a row of French *fonctionnaires*,—a *directeur-général* and numerous assistants, ending with a supervisor of works. Such colonies are not a source of strength but of weakness to the *mère-patrie.* Instead of being so many outlying bulwarks, each contributing its quota of industry and wealth, these "uncolonised colonies," these languishing and artificially maintained possessions, are merely so many hostages to fortune.

The colonies and possessions of Britain are in marked contrast to those of France, whether, on the one hand, in "white man's countries," such as Australasia, Canada, South Africa; or, on the other,

in our Eastern possessions and dependencies. The Anglo-Saxon understands how to adapt himself to circumstances (as witness India, the Straits Settlements and Hongkong); and, apart altogether from the material advantages obtained, our country has spread its ideas and even its language throughout the whole world.

Whether it be to the advantage of France to make the sacrifices she does for purely political purposes is not for us to judge. The French have a saying: *Les nations ne se servent que de deux langues—la guerre et le commerce.* In our colonial expansion we begin with trade, and sometimes end with war. The French commence with war and seem unable to get beyond it. Russia begins and ends with diplomacy: she assimilates, gaining her way without conflict if possible, though when driven to it she wages war in a ruthless spirit. The French views with regard to Indo-China and southern China are now well known, and are not concealed by the French themselves.* The Russian

* The Report of the Lyons Mission to southern China urges activity. *Inter alia* it says: "A country which last year imported 192,000,000 of francs' worth of cotton goods must be well worth an effort, and an annual demand for 100,000 tons of cotton thread is considered a tempting prospect for the French thread manufactory in Indo-China." But as in the Chinese Customs returns no single article of French textile is mentioned, what the Lyons delegates mean is that the British trade in these articles is to be transferred to France. The Report vividly paints the advantages for France of the political objectives, Yunnan and Szechuan, and the advantageous position in Tongking. The French plan is to drive a wedge in between Burma and the Upper Yangtsze, just as they tried in Burma and Siam to bar our access to China, and just as they are

plans, notwithstanding "assurances" which, though taken at face value nowadays, were valued aright by Lord Palmerston,* are also evident. What has never been properly understood, however, is that "the theatre of European jealousies and rivalries has been extended from Turkey and the Levant to

now attempting to do in West Africa, and, to go back a hundred years, as they attempted to do in America. It is, in fact, the secular French policy, which is as constant and as calculable as the movement of Russia.

"But Englishmen who have followed the course of events; who have watched, year after year, the shadow of the Russian eclipse sweeping across Persia and Central Asia until it has reached the frontiers of India and Afghanistan; and who now see France reviving her old ambition of an Eastern Empire, and fanning in every direction the hatred and jealousy of England among her ignorant and passionate people, realise with sufficient distinctness that the alliance of Russia and France is directed as much against England and her Eastern Empire as against the powers of the Triple Alliance. . . . the supremacy of Britain in Southern Asia, in which are bound up the freedom of the Mediterranean, our predominance in Egypt, and the maintenance of the Suez Canal route to India."—"England and France in Asia," by Sir LEPEL GRIFFIN, *Nineteenth Century*, November 1893.

* "The policy of the Russian Government," Lord Palmerston wrote in 1851, "has always been to proceed with its conquests as rapidly as the apathy or want of firmness of other Governments permitted, but to retire if it encountered determined opposition, and then to await the next favourable opportunity to renew the onslaught on its intended victim." "In January 1873 Count Schouvaloff had been sent on a special mission to pacify England with regard to the expedition against Khiva, and had then declared that 'not only was it far from the intention of the Emperor to take possession of Khiva, but positive orders had been prepared to prevent it, and directions given that the conditions imposed should be such as would not in any way lead to the prolonged occupation of Khiva.'" "Communication of an intention," it was after explained, "did not amount to an absolute promise."—*England and Russia in the East*, Sir HENRY RAWLINSON, p. 317.

the China seas; and the Eastern problem of the future for England is Russia on the west, and France on the east, closing in on her Indian frontiers," as I wrote in 1885. Was this realised recently? Is it even now understood? Yet the Franco-Russian alliance foreshadowed thirteen years ago has gradually grown into existence and is now in active operation, rendering our position on the north-east frontier of India one of serious anxiety.

In describing at the time the outcome of the Franco-Chinese War, I passed briefly over the possibility of a Franco-Russian alliance, because, in the then unsatisfactory condition of politics in France and unfortunate position of affairs in Tongking, it seemed hardly fair to dwell on this subject. But it was shown that at any time a Franco-Russian *entente* was quite within the range of possibility. It was clear as noonday that, if the Tongking Expedition had not turned out as it did, if everything had only gone smoothly,—if, in fact, Ferry's brilliant scheme for a French Indo-Chinese Empire had met with anything like the success that he anticipated,—we should at once have had a Franco-Russian alliance, and that actively engaged against ourselves.

The policy of Russia, it was evident, was to place herself in an advantageous position alongside the two most populous countries in the world, the two richest empires of Asia, for the purpose not of violently "attacking" those empires by rough military methods, but of being able at the convenient

season to exercise influence and pressure, by menace and coercion if necessary, and by such means gain what she wanted elsewhere. The basis of Russian policy must always be kept clearly in mind. The positions she desires elsewhere are as yet to be found not on the Indian littoral or on the coast of China itself, but in the Extreme West and Extreme East; in the neighbourhood of Asia Minor and the Levant, in the Persian Gulf, and in the Japan and China seas—dominating bases for territorial aggression. The attention of British statesmen, military authorities and politicians who take an interest in national defence has been concentrated entirely on the north-western frontier of India. But has Britain no other Indian frontier? It has been obvious that whenever Russia chose to seize another opportunity to move forward, she would do so in the direction of the China or Japan Seas, and always in alliance with France. Russia has lately practically obtained Manchuria, holds Corea in a vice and at her mercy, and has secured an immense length of littoral, with not one but many "ice-free" ports,—some of them purely strategic. More than that, she to all intents and purposes dominates China at and from Peking. There is no disguising that fact. Those who have followed the history of the conquests of China, notably that accomplished under the Manchu dynasty, will not need to be told that this domination of China by Russia at the capital would seriously affect British rule in India, and might even

create a grave danger for the Empire.* How much more now that France is the close ally of Russia! Never should we lose sight of the facts that India is a conquered country, where discontent smoulders which may be fanned into conflagration by the neighbourhood of rival European Powers; that, as Rawlinson said, if England has a vulnerable heel it is in the East; and that the stronger the position of Russia in Asia "the higher will be the tone she can command in discussing with us any question of European policy."

The truth is, the people of this country have been content to remain in ignorance of the whole history of this Far Eastern movement. Geography is unpopular, the region is remote, the points at issue are complicated, our interests are not realised; and not only is it the business of no one to preach the truth, but it is the *métier* of many to conceal it. When it is remembered, however, that not only has Britain a great and growing commerce with China and the whole Far East, but that growth of trade is an absolute necessity, with her rapidly increasing population, with foreign competition becoming fiercer every day and markets being closed against her, the importance of commanding strategical positions in the China Sea ought to become more and more evident. It is to China alone that we can look in the future not merely for any

* The military question has been ably treated by Colonel Mark Bell (*Asiatic Quarterly Review*, April 1895), who has had exceptional opportunities for studying the question from personal observation.

great expansion of our commerce,* but for any considerable strengthening of our general position in Asia. And we are now in such a position that retreat or inaction will be fatal. For Russia's advance and occupation of strategical positions, enabling her to throw a lasso round the throat of China and to endanger Japan, are not merely a standing menace to our enormous and rapidly growing interests in those regions. They may mean the utilisation of China as an industrial and political force to be equipped and used for our destruction. And the possibility of having those masses organised and wielded against us, setting aside altogether the mere military aspect, is serious enough to rouse us from our lethargy. Once in possession of the long-coveted seaboard with its "ice-free" ports, and of Manchuria—the territory said to be required for her railways to the Pacific—the immediate incentive to a forward policy on the part of Russia will be removed, we are constantly assured, for she would then have no desire for war. More likely is it to strengthen that incentive. It is less an invasion of India, less an open attack, immediate or even proximate, than the rise of Asiatic Russia, a rival Power utilising the resources of China, and with

* How vital is its maintenance, not merely for the sake of our Empire, but for the sustenance of our people, no arguments are needed to prove. It is only in the East, and especially in the Far East, that we may still hope to keep and to create open markets for British manufactures. Every port, every town, and every village that passes into French or Russian hands is an outlet lost to Manchester, Bradford, or Bombay.—*Problems of the Far East* (p. 415), by Hon. G. N. Curzon.

ambitious allies, that we have to apprehend. In no spirit of hostility is it that Russia or any other Power is spoken of; far from that: rather in a spirit of admiration. They are justified in pushing their interests in their own way. What I wish to emphasise is that, in place of being supine, we should be doing the same in *our* way. Years ago the justice of Russia's wish for an ice-free port on the Pacific was admitted, but the danger to ourselves involved in her coming south was at the same time clearly indicated.*

The importance of promoting intercourse between the two most populous countries in the world, India and China, so widely different in their circumstances yet having so many and such vital interests in common, should require no argument. The idea has its foundations in the actual circumstances of the two empires. While essentially commercial and peaceful, both are endowed, though in varied degree, with the complementary resources which, united, would make them not merely a serious antagonist but dominant in southern Asia. The interests of both and the existence of one are immediately threatened by a common enemy, Russia, engaged upon a purely military conquest—a Power that, if unchecked by such a combination, will, at no distant period, effect the disintegration of one empire and

* A series of most luminous articles, marking the various stages of the Russian advance and the evolution of the Far Eastern question generally, will be found in *Blackwood*, from 1893 onwards, from the pen of Mr. Alexander Michie, a writer of the high authority on all matters connected with China.

eventually bring about the downfall of the other. With so much in common, the fundamental interests of both are one. Such an *entente* should and could have been cemented by inter-acquaintance and inter-communication. In such an understanding would have been and might still be found the best guarantee for the preservation of the truest interests of the two empires, the surest means of preserving the peace of Asia. China knows that the policy of England, whatever it may have been, is now one of commercial expansion and development only, untainted by any ulterior designs, and that while England wants Chinese trade, Russia wants Chinese provinces; and as China is compelled by circumstances to take a new departure in the direction of industrial and defensive enterprise, she is disposed to look to England as her most efficient guide and her safest ally. Better far than "disinterestedness" in international relations is an interest which is mutual, clearly avowed and understood, and such is the bond which should cement British India with China. The unique opportunity so long enjoyed for developing our relations with our Imperial neighbour, bound to us by geographical and other ties, has been neglected.

It was our duty to take China into tutelage, to strengthen her by insisting upon reforms. Instead of that, England has blindly counted on China as an ally against Russia: China, in fact, was to play the part of buffer. Our diplomacy was devoted to seeking her good-will, even at

the cost of undue deference in the questions of Sikkim, Tibet and Burma; slights and affronts were met with humility, claims remained unsatisfied or were shelved, and "treaty rights" became the synonym for "treaty wrongs." At the same time China was encouraged against Russia, vague promises of help were held out, and hopes were raised which were doomed to bring nothing but disappointment in their train, until English promises became, as a Chinese statesman in my presence termed them, "from the teeth outwards." After some forty years of discussion and "consideration" by our Government at home and in India, while Russia has pushed her way across 5000 miles of Siberia, and is fast closing in on China, while the Russians with audacious courage have made progress which must compel the admiration of the world, we have been supine; and China to-day leans on Russia,—not on Great Britain, which she was for years anxious to do.

To India the further opening of China offers a considerable expansion of her commerce, while to England it is a matter of national importance to increase her influence and regain the leadership in the various new enterprises—financial and industrial—which China will be obliged shortly to undertake. To China a closer relationship with India, and therefore with England, would be a considerable aid towards the internal development of the Empire. To promote these objects increased intercourse and mutual acquaintance are necessary. Experience in

China, as elsewhere, has taught us that the chief obstacle to commerce and international relations, in fact to progress generally, is ignorance of the country and its conditions; and the growth of trade which has followed the treaties of 1858–60 is mainly due to the opening of the interior by communications and the better acquaintance thus brought about. Apart from the question of trade, the alliance would be a pledge of tranquillity throughout the whole Far East. If the present position be such as has been indicated, it should have been the policy of the Indian and Imperial Governments, and also of the neighbouring colonial authorities, to avail themselves of every opportunity of improving their communications with the vast Empire of China, and by all natural, silent and unobtrusive means to draw closer the bonds of intimacy, and thus establish intercourse on solid and immovable grounds. Yet how little has been accomplished in this direction! how little even attempted! *

Our possessions furnish us with most admirable

* "Let Great Britain, then, take the lead, as she has hitherto always fearlessly done. Let her persevere in the task of educating China, and not, as if unfitted for it, resign it to others. China is one of our Imperial neighbours, bound to us by ties of commerce and geographical position; we cannot neglect her without injury to our Imperial interests. The decay of empire can ever be traced to a failure to correspond to its environments, that is, to actively sympathise with its neighbours, and we decline to acknowledge that the Empire is declining. The latent wealth of China is undoubted. She is of greater value than many Indias; her peoples are peaceful, tractable, and easily ruled."—Colonel Mark Bell, V.C., C.B., *Asiatic Quarterly Review*, April 1895.

bases for commercial expansion in Asia, such as are not now, and never can be, in the power of any other nation, unless our supremacy be wrested from us. We maintain along the avenues of our Eastern trade, as *points d'appui*, the Suez Canal, Aden, Ceylon, India, Singapore, Hongkong.* Especially

* "In Asia the area of British rule comprises the peninsula of Aden and the island of Perim; the great peninsula of India, with the Burmese provinces and the outlying groups of Andamans, the Nicobars, and the Laccadives; Ceylon, with which the Maldive Islands are nominally connected; the islands of Hongkong and Labuan; the Straits Settlements, including the two islands of Singapore and Penang, and the territories of Province Wellesley, the Dindings, and Malacca on the main Malay peninsula; and the Keeling Islands, far out in the Indian Ocean, now a little dependency of the Straits Settlements. Scattered as these possessions are, they have all a common character. They all consist of peninsulas or islands, for British power and influence in Asia are confined to the outskirts of the continent accessible from the Southern Ocean, and have not penetrated into the great mass of the interior. They are all in or near the tropics. They all must be classed, not as settlements, but as dependencies, held either, as India and Ceylon, directly for their own value, or, as the smaller Eastern colonies, partly as military stations, partly as emporia of trade. Aden, for instance, is at once a link in the chain of stations on the way to India and a place of outlet for the Arabian trade; Singapore taps the trade of the Malay peninsula, is a place of junction for Eastern and Australian traffic, and is also an outpost of the empire in the Malay seas; Hongkong is a half-military, half-commercial station on the borders of the Chinese Empire; Labuan a foothold off the coast of Borneo. In these Asiatic dependencies, far more than in any other part of the world, the English have been called to the task of governing native races. To speak of British colonisation in this quarter of the globe is really a misuse of terms: the climate is not for the English breed, and the waste places of the earth are not to be found in the East Indies. The Englishman came to Asia, and has held his ground in Asia, not as a settler, but as a merchant, a conqueror, and a ruler."—*Historical Geography of the British Colonies*, Lucas.

valuable is our land base Burma, which is our gateway to China. It cannot be gainsaid that upon the political supremacy of England in the East, upon the possession and extension of India and our Eastern possessions, chiefly depend the continuance of our commercial prosperity, and, as a *sequitur*, the ability to support the dense and rapidly increasing population of England. To actually part with any of our colonies, or any of these English possessions, there is now no longer any desire, and there is less indifference to their value than there was. But the country has not yet realised what is at stake, nor how strong our position is if we choose to use it, and that to shirk our duty now will mean our being gradually ousted by rivals, who are not averse to undertake the necessary responsibilities, from the greatest market we possess and from a commanding position of the world. We are now at the parting of the ways, and the failure to take the right course will mean the loss of the commercial supremacy of England, and eventually the disintegration of the Empire.

Since November 16, 1896, when the German Government, in connection with the Bismarck revelations, through its Foreign Secretary * was com-

* Baron Marschall von Bieberstein, in the Reichstag—a remarkable statement. This affirmation of an understanding, based on common interests, between Germany and Russia in the Far East, was treated with contempt in this country. Yet it contained the master-key to recent events. The extra-continental interests of the two Powers "will in all probability furnish us with an opportunity of acting in harmony with the Power with which we co-operated last

pelled in self-defence to "give away" the trend of its future policy, it has been apparent that there was an increasing tendency towards a working understanding,—on the "live and let live" principle—in the Near and Far East between Germany and Russia, and therefore also with France (Russia's ally), for lovers in the red heat of a *liaison* are not to be separated. This *entente* was based upon mutual interests—territorial in the case of Russia, commercial in that of Germany, and political in the case of France—the corner-stone of the combination being Russia, whose favour has been cultivated at all costs by France, in less degree by Germany, and latterly even by Austria-Hungary. Its chief *raison d'être* was the reduction of England.

In China England has been completely isolated.* Her efforts to achieve something had for years past been rendered futile by a systematic process of thwarting, practised as a fine art, by Russia and France. These two countries, and later also Germany, were securing for themselves solid advantages. Japan was watching silently, anxiously preparing for eventualities. Our official optimists talked then, as they do now, of the "concessions" to England—the "rectification" of the Burmo-Chinese frontier and the incomplete "opening" of the West River. We had done little or nothing to

year," Baron Marschall told the world. The occasion was one when the truth had to be revealed, and the declaration should have been noted, and acted on.

* Mr. Chamberlain stated the matter clearly in his speech of May 20, 1898.

establish overland railway communication from Burma to China,—to reach China "from behind," as Lord Salisbury called it,—and the Upper Yangtsze, the main artery of China, remained practically unopened. Such was the situation early in 1898.

To understand the present situation, the natural sequel to 1895, it is first of all necessary to recognise the fact that Russia is actually the protector of China against all comers, and that France supports her solidly, while Germany, having taken the decisive step of placing herself alongside Russia, is likely to follow the Russian lead, for two sufficient reasons: for fear of displeasing Russia, the ally of France, and because "concessions" are not likely to be got in China by Germany in direct and open opposition to Russia. Russian influence has for some time past been all-powerful at Peking, mainly through the timely assistance rendered to China in 1895, followed up by a persistent policy, cemented by an understanding, offensive and defensive. The fundamental fact of a close understanding between Russia and China has for some time been patent to all the world except ourselves, the chief features being: 1. An alliance, offensive and defensive. 2. Branch railways through Manchuria. 3. The refortification of Port Arthur and Talienwan, and the fortification of Kiaochau, all to be paid for by China—any or all of the three war harbours to be placed at the disposal of Russia whenever required. China, *parole d'honneur* of course, denied

everything save the northern Manchurian railways, but Russia has never denied anything except, and that very vaguely, the accuracy of the so-called "Cassini" Convention as published by a Shanghai paper. But what charming *naïveté*, to be moved one way or the other by *démentis* from either Russia or China! Apart from any written contract, however, "facts speak for themselves," as M. Hanotaux said of the Franco-Russian alliance. If Russia had a claim on Kiaochau, does it not follow that Germany cannot be now acting in opposition to Russia? And what is there to prevent Germany some day from finding that Kiaochau does not "meet her requirements," in case she should want another port; and in that case what should prevent Russia stepping in? Provision has, in fact, been made enabling Germany to treat Kiaochau as a negotiable bill of exchange.

That Russia has been exceptionally active at Peking during the past few years was evident to those who chose to see; but our leaders would not see; our *rôle* was that of the little-concerned spectator. In view of what was occurring it required some audacity to vaunt our concessions, the "rectification" of the Burmo-Chinese frontier, and the "opening" of the West River, especially as the latter stopped short at Wuchau, instead of including the river to its navigation limit, with right of railway to Yunnan. And while we made so much of our concessions, which are certain to be contested, there are not a few ready to demonstrate the

unimportance of Russia's being at Port Arthur and Talienwan.*

* Describing what he terms the "contingent interest" in Corea, Mr. Curzon says: "A country so well provided with harbours, which could both supply and shelter large flotillas, and so richly endowed with many potential sources of wealth, might involve a serious menace to British commerce and interests throughout the China seas, and even in the Pacific Ocean, if held by a hostile State. A Russian port and fleet, for instance, in the Gulf of Pechili, would, in time of war, constitute as formidable a danger to British shipping on the Yellow Sea as they would to the metropolitan province and the capital of China. Permanent Russian squadrons at Port Lazareff and Fusan would convert her into the greatest naval Power in the Pacific. The balance of power in the Far East would be seriously jeopardised, if not absolutely overturned, by such a development; and England is prohibited alike by her Imperial objects and her commercial needs from lending her sanction to any such issue."—*Problems of the Far East*, second edition, p. 213.

CHAPTER XIV

THE POLITICAL QUESTION—*continued*

THE fact is that our diplomacy as against Russia has been a failure in Asia. The whole history of the Russian advance teaches us that lesson. What is wanted on our side is a plan solidly backed, and a man. Instead, we have trusted to phrases and have lived on illusions. But how can there be any plan when our Government has no real Intelligence Department, when it is uninformed? How dare we entertain the idea of force, when we shun the responsibility attaching to alliances, and while our only idea of strengthening ourselves is to multiply the number of our war vessels? And under such a system how can we expect to have efficient agents? In the one field where of late years we have been successful—Egypt—we had our plan: we had the twelve thousand bayonets, and we had the man. In China we have never had the three, and seldom even the last. How few are the Cromers, the Nicholsons, the Sandemans in the service of Britain! It is not that she cannot produce them,—no country in the world has them in such profusion—but that the system, or rather the want of system,

does not tolerate, still less encourage, them.* The diplomatist, the frontier officer, is ever afraid of being disavowed, has always to think of the "question in the House." And how can it be otherwise with the feeling abroad that British Governments are seldom strong, are seldom firm and consistent, and are only too ready to sacrifice a scapegoat? Any positive plan, too, is hard to conceive, and irksome to carry out. For this reason British Governments fall back on negotiation, which, as Popowski says, "has the appearance of doing the utmost to check the Russians and at the same time appeases popular opinion. No party, no group of talented persons, enters a sufficiently vigorous protest against these futile negotiations." Russia's policy both in Europe and Asia is active and persistent, whilst England would be only too glad to secure the maintenance of the *status quo*.

* It is notorious to all those having any knowledge of the inner springs and workings of affairs in the Far East that the Germans and Russians are pre-eminently better supplied than ourselves in this respect. We cannot, in fact, seriously profess to have any Intelligence Department. So long as we are fortunate to have at Calcutta and Peking men such as we now have (Dufferin and Parkes) all may go smoothly; but a real reform in this matter of intelligence is imperative. Is it then to be wondered at that, with such a system in force for many years, our once paramount influence has gradually decayed throughout the whole Far East? If the diplomatic and consular services require to be revivified and to have a fresh spirit infused into them, it is at the head-centre that reform must begin. Without going to the root of the evil no real reform is possible.—*English Policy in the Far East*, by A. R. Colquhoun. Special Correspondence to the *Times*. 1884.

"The English would even submit quietly to Russia's forward movement," says Popowski, "were its pace less rapid, as in that case the fight for India would in all probability be forced on a later generation. From this state of things Russia reaps great benefit. She holds the initiative, and can suit her action to circumstances; and should she now and again, swayed by public opinion or the temperament of her statesmen, be induced to advance somewhat too boldly, she can, as in 1878, purchase peace by surrendering a portion of her acquisitions. Russia will, therefore, doubtless attain her ultimate object if the Powers concerned be not convinced of the need for energetic resistance." *

There is nothing unforeseen in the recent development of affairs in the Far East. On the contrary, it has been clearly indicated by various writers in the past fifty years. As far back as 1850, Meadows wrote:

"China will not be conquered by any Western Power until she becomes the Persia of some future Alexander the Great of Russia, the Macedon of Free Europe. England, America, and France will, if they are wise, wage severally or collectively a war of exhaustion with Russia rather than allow her to conquer China, for when she has done that she will be *Mistress of the World*."

And in reply to those who ridiculed our "guarding against imaginary Russian dangers in China," he said:

"Many may suppose the danger to be too remote to be a practical subject for the present generation. The subject is most practical at the present time, for as the English, Americans, and French deal with China and with her relations with Russia, so the event will be. For those to whom 'it will last our time' is a word of practical wisdom, this volume is not written."

Again, a few years later he wrote:

* "The Rival Powers in Asia." Josef Popowski.

"The greatest, though not nearest, danger of a weak China lies precisely in those territorial aggressions of Russia which she began to attempt two centuries ago, . . . which, if allowed to go on, will speedily give her a large and populous territory, faced with Sveaborgs and Sebastopols, on the seaboard of Eastern Asia. . . . Let England, America, and France beware how they create a sick giant in the Far East. . . . China is a world necessity." *

Foreshadowing the gradual extension of Russia into China, and the time when she would become mistress of Peking, when, with all Manchuria organised behind her, she could occupy the Yellow River basin, Meadows rightly expresses the opinion that should that occur no combinations of Powers would then be able to oppose Russia. "With 120 millions of Chinese to work or fight for her, nothing could stand between Russia and the conquest of the Empire; not China alone but Europe itself would then be dominated, and it would cost the Russian Emperor of China but little trouble to overwhelm the Pacific States." No extravagant opinion this, but a sound far-seeing judgment from a writer whose name is to-day unknown to his countrymen.

No British policy in the Far East can be successful unless it forms part of a world-policy, and unless we are able to apply to the centre of gravity of a European combination force enough to control its balance. Our diplomacy must, in short, be supported by force, naval and military.

Unless supported by Britain, Japan dared not

* "The Chinese and their Rebellions." By Thomas Taylor Meadows. 1856.

entertain the idea of opposing Russia, still less Russia and her friends, in their schemes for utilising the resources of China. Without a definite alliance, Japan could do nothing, and trusted to Britain to maintain the balance of power in the Far East, just as Britain seemed inclined to unduly depend on Japan to perform that same useful office. To rely overmuch on Japan would not be the course of wisdom, valuable ally as she certainly would be under certain circumstances, and possessing as she does many interests in common with us.

And this leads us to a brief consideration of alliances generally. Within the past few months we have been counselled to come to an understanding with Russia, with France, with Japan, with Germany, each in turn. The question of national alliance is still treated by us as until lately was that of the Navy,—as a matter which could always be dealt with when an emergency arose. But alliances are not thus extemporised on the instant; far from being fruits to pluck at will, they are of slow growth. And while it might suit Britain to come to an arrangement with Russia, for example, what has that Power to gain? Our difficulty is her opportunity. If we are serious, we must remodel our institutions on the basis that the foreign policy of a country must be judged from the naval and military standpoints, as well as from the commercial and diplomatic. They are essential to each other. Yet not only have we no such supreme co-ordination in national policy as other countries have, but the

different departments of State with us are treated as if they were quite unrelated to each other. In most Continental States foreign affairs fall within the province of the monarch, or that of a select number of bureaucrats; but in England nothing worthy the name of a "policy" can be seriously undertaken or pursued until public opinion has first been thoroughly enlisted in its favour. Therefore it is of infinitely greater importance for Britain than for other Powers that public opinion and the Government should be well informed on all subjects connected with foreign policy. Continental Governments, too, are infinitely better informed on military and political matters than our own, in which the War Minister is not even a military man. Can there be any more complete condemnation of our system than the fact that even now, after the complete collapse of our conduct of Asiatic affairs, Great Britain, more an Asiatic Power than Russia, still possesses no Asiatic Department?

The position of Russia with regard to China seems not yet to be realised. Russia, herself semi-Asiatic, thoroughly understands how to deal with an Asiatic government and to make herself feared. The Russian spokesmen claim that they are working for civilisation—not for Russia alone, but for the whole of Europe; and we are assured that as soon as Russia is strong enough to declare Free Trade she will do so. There is no need to express doubt of the sincerity of such professions. But

they are only to be understood on the hypothesis that Russia seriously contemplates an eventual supreme domination which, once firmly established, would enable her to deal with all the Powers of Europe as generously as, for instance, she is now doing with France. Russia poses in Europe as the "bulwark of Christianity" against the Yellow Peril; while in China she is the "protector" of her weak kinsman against the wave of Western aggression. This doctrine (the pro-Asiatic) is preached with as great ability and persistency at Peking as is the other (the pro-European) doctrine in England, through the Press, with the view to influence public opinion.

The Chinese people in the north, at the capital especially, undoubtedly discriminate between Russians and other foreigners. Like other Orientals, they only believe what they see; and Russia is seen and realised on the northern frontiers. This contact, and the gift possessed by Russia of dealing with the Chinese, lead them to believe in her. In the south the same may be said to a certain extent of the British, though they have the habit, contrary to that of the Russians, of holding aloof from the Chinese, with whom Russians of all grades miss no opportunity of ingratiating themselves.

The analogies and contrasts which the Russians and Chinese mutually present have been admirably depicted by Michie:

"Analogies in the manners, customs, and modes of thought of

the two races are constantly turning up; and their resemblance to the Chinese has become a proverb among the Russians themselves.

"The Russians and the Chinese are peculiarly suited to each other in the commercial as well as in the diplomatic departments. They have an equal regard for truth, for the Russian, spite of his fair complexion, is at the bottom more than half Asiatic. There is nothing original about this observation, but it serves to explain how it is that the Russians have won their way into China by quiet and peaceable means, while we have always been running our head against a stone wall, and never could get over it without breaking it down. The Russians meet the Chinese as Greek meets Greek: craft is encountered with craft, politeness with politeness, and patience with patience. They understand each other's character thoroughly, because they are so closely alike.

"When either Russian or Chinese meets a European, say an Englishman, he instinctively recoils from the blunt, straightforward, up-and-down manner of coming to business at once; and the Asiatic either declines a contest which he cannot fight with his own weapons, or, seizing the weak point of his antagonist, he angles with him until he wearies him into acquiescence. As a rule, the Asiatic has the advantage. His patient equanimity and heedlessness of the waste of time are too much for the impetuous haste of the European. This characteristic of the Russian trading classes has enabled them to insinuate themselves into the confidence of the Chinese; to fraternise and identify themselves with them, and, as it were, make common cause with them in their daily life; while the European holds himself aloof, and only comes in contact with the Chinese when business requires it; for in all the rest a great gulf separates them in thoughts, ideas, and the aims of life."—*Siberian Overland Route.* 1864.

Comprehending, therefore, the Chinese character, seeing clearly that China is unable to perform the elementary functions of society, that Peking is another Teheran or Constantinople, that, while the

people are sound, the Court and officialdom are corrupt, Russia has studied and gained over certain influential people, and applied the maxim *Divide et impera* with skill.* What China is taught night and day is that Russia is a land Power and therefore alone can protect China, that she keeps her promises and threats, that with England it is always a case of *vox et præterea nihil.* In short, Russia protects China in a peculiar sense—that is, for a price, to be paid to Russia or even to her friends—a fact which clearly shows how powerless is the Chinese Government and how powerful that of

* The following observations, written nearly forty years ago by Lockhart, the missionary, after a long residence in China, show how history repeats itself, and how little we, as a nation, have learnt. "The Russian Government anticipated us—not in the knowledge of the advantages of close commercial and political relations with an Empire so enormous in its resources, but in the employment of those arguments that alone could render a vain and effeminate State sensible of their value. . . . The map of All the Russias, published at St. Petersburg, now includes that vast portion of Central Asia heretofore the outlying Provinces of the Chinese Empire beyond the Great Wall. Having placed a Mission in the Chinese capital, and organised an overwhelming army in Chinese Tartary, with magazines of warlike resources, Russia easily secured a permanent footing in region after region, till she had dominated over, and then obtained the cession of, all the intervening space, leaving the conquest of the entire Chinese Empire to the time when it should please the reigning Tsar to order his Cossacks to take possession. It is impossible to state with any precision the amount of moral or material support that the Chinese Emperor received from his Imperial brother and formidable neighbour, which encouraged him to so obstinate a resistance to the demands of England and France (in 1860); but a slight acquaintance with Russian policy must satisfy any one that, having established itself as a favoured nation, Russia could not regard with complacency any attempt made by another nation to share such advantages."

the Tsar. The dominating idea instilled into the Chinese Court and officialdom, which, in the absence of a strong policy on our part, are in a hypnotised condition, is to be saved from Japan. The great object of Russian policy is to utilise China for purposes of territorial and political expansion.

What the utilisation of China would mean can only be realised by a full appreciation of the extraordinary resources of that country judged from various points of view. She has the men to create armies and navies; the materials, especially iron and coal, requisite for the purposes of railways and steam navigation;—all the elements, in fact, to build up a great living force. One thing alone is wanting,—the will, the directing power,—which, absent from within, is now being applied from without. That supplied, there are to be found in China in abundance the capacity to carry out, the brains to plan, the hands to work. And when it is understood that not merely is the soil rich and fertile, but that the mineral resources—the greatest, perhaps, in the whole world—are as yet practically untouched, the merest surface being scratched; when we consider the extent of China's population; the ability and enterprise, and, above all, the intense vitality, of the people, as strong as ever after four millenniums; when we reflect on the general characteristics of the race, is it not clear that the Chinese, under direction, are destined to dominate the whole of Eastern Asia, and maybe to play a leading part in the affairs of the world? Even although the Empire appears to be now

breaking up,* it is capable, under tutelage, of becoming reconsolidated. Often before now, when conquered, has China either thrown off the yoke or absorbed its conquerors. But never before has the conqueror come, as does the Tsar to-day, as a great organising force,—as *entraîneur d'hommes.*

In peaceful pursuits, in agriculture, the arts and manufactures, no limit can be placed to the capabilities of China; and in the paths of war it is difficult to foretell what, under direction, may not be accomplished. Conquered by Russia, organised, disciplined, and led by Russian officers and Russian administrators, an industrial and military organisation would be developed, which India could not face and which would shake to its foundations the entire fabric of the British Empire.

As regards the excellent quality of the raw material for military purposes, high testimony has been borne by travellers and military critics. Wingrove Cooke, the *Times* correspondent with the Allied Forces in 1857–8, one of the best critics of Chinese

* The theory that China's decadence is due to the fact that she has long since reached maturity, and has outlived the natural term of national existence, does not hold good. The mass of the people have not degenerated; they are as fresh and vigorous as ever they were; it is the Government only that has become old and feeble; and a change of Dynasty may yet restore to China the lustre which legitimately belongs to so great a nation. The indestructible vitality of Chinese institutions has preserved the country unchanged throughout many revolutions. The high civilisation of the people, and their earnestness in the pursuit of peaceful industries, have enabled them to maintain their national existence through more dynastic changes than, perhaps, any other country or nation has experienced.—Michie, *Overland Siberian Route.*

men and affairs; Count d'Escayrac de Lauture, one of the Peking prisoners in 1859–60; Chinese Gordon and Lord Wolseley, have all spoken highly of the courage and endurance of the Chinese soldier, and an excellent *résumé* of his qualities has been given by one who had experience with Gordon's "Ever Victorious Army."* Prjevalski says *à propos* of the Tongking campaign:

"She (China) lacks the proper material; she lacks the life-giving spirit. Let Europeans supply the Chinese with any number of arms that they please; let them exert themselves ever so energetically to train the Chinese soldiers; let them even supply leaders; the Chinese army will, nevertheless, even under the most favourable conditions, never be more than an artificially created, mechanically united, unstable organism. Subject it but once to the serious trial of war, speedy dissolution will overtake such an army, which could never hope for victory over a foe animated with any real spirit."

If the Chinese failed to profit by their numerical superiority and their power of movement in Tongking, it must be remembered that they were as ill

* "The old notion is pretty well got rid of that they are at all a cowardly people, when properly paid and efficiently led; while the regularity and order of their habits, which dispose them to peace in ordinary times, gives place to a daring bordering upon recklessness in time of war. Their intelligence and capacity for remembering facts make them well fitted for use in modern warfare, as does also the coolness and calmness of their disposition. Physically, they are, on the average, not so strong as Europeans, but considerably more so than most of the other races of the East; and, on a cheap diet of rice, vegetables, salt fish, and pork, they can go through a vast amount of fatigue, whether in a temperate climate or a tropical one, where Europeans are ill fitted for exertion. Their wants are few; they have no caste prejudices, and hardly any appetite for intoxicating liquors."

equipped and supplied, and nearly as unorganised and unofficered, as they were in the Chino-Japanese War. Transport, commissariat, tents, medical service,—all the paraphernalia employed in organised army work,—were then, as in the late campaign, absolutely unknown.

Notwithstanding the judgment of Prjevalski that they are animated by neither military nor patriotic spirit, my opinion is that, however undisciplined they proved themselves in the Chino-Japanese War; however badly the undrilled, unfed, unled Chinamen in uniform compared with the highly-organised troops of Japan, their capabilities as a fighting machine may be rated exceedingly high. The apparent inconsistencies of the Chinese can, perhaps, be reconciled. That they offer excellent military material, when shaped and guided by foreigners, is certain. No doubt whatever should be entertained on this subject. If from the Manchurian provinces, mainly Shantung men, they are steady, willing to be taught, and amenable to discipline; of splendid physique, and able to bear hardships and cold without a murmur. If from Hunan, they possess many of the best characteristics of highland races,—dash, courage, and loyalty to their own leaders,—but they are more difficult to manage, and are not so steady in any sense of the word. Recruits from the Shantung province would prove the best: their physique and their docility would certainly leave nothing to be desired. The Southerners seem to be generally held in low esteem,

but we must not forget that the best fighters of the Taiping armies were the men from the Canton province, and as seamen the coast populations of southern China are unequalled,—a point to be borne in mind.* The western highlanders, whether Mohammedans or not, are men of good physique, and would make good fighting material. The Mongolians are horsemen from their early years, and doubtless have the qualities for the making of light cavalry of the Cossack type. Russia knows this well, and has for many years flattered the chiefs in small ways, and accustomed them to look up to her as a great overshadowing power at their doors.

* "It may be that it would not be impossible to find in China all the elements necessary for organising the most formidable army in the world. The Chinese are intelligent, ingenious, and docile. They comprehend rapidly whatever they are taught, and retain it in their memory. They are persevering, and astonishingly active when they choose to exert themselves, respectful to authority, submissive and obedient, and they would easily accommodate themselves to all the exigencies of the severest discipline. The Chinese possess also a quality most precious in soldiers, and which can scarcely be found as well developed among any other people—namely, an incomparable facility for supporting privations of every kind. We have often been astonished to see how they will bear hunger, thirst, heat, cold, the difficulties and fatigues of a long march, as if it were mere play. Thus, both morally and physically, they seem capable of meeting every demand.

"China would present also inexhaustible resources for a navy. Without speaking of the vast extent of her coasts, along which the numerous population pass the greater part of their lives on the sea, the great rivers and immense lakes in the interior, always covered with fishing and trading junks, might furnish multitudes of men, habituated from their infancy to navigation, nimble, experienced, and capable of becoming excellent sailors for long expeditions."—Huc, *The Chinese Empire.*

The tribes will act as the chiefs direct, for there is no tie of national feeling between them and the Chinese. The Manchu, who settles down as a married man, and passes his time in eating, sleeping and smoking opium, as a soldier is now despised, while the Hunan "brave" is regarded as the warrior who does any hard fighting which is on hand.

Like the Central Asian peoples, the Chinese possess, in a high degree, the virtue of passive bravery. At first the Russians expended much time and wasted many lives in besieging and storming towns in Central Asia, acting with caution, throwing up approaches and opening trenches. But this method was abandoned for that of open escalade,—for instance, at Tashkend, Khojand and Uratapa. Then was adopted the plan of storming the breaches, to effect which breaching batteries were thrown up at very close quarters, when, choosing a favourable time, the place was carried by storm. From every point of view this proved to be the best plan. The Chinaman, as has been proved repeatedly, is like the Central Asian in the respect that under cover he sustains the heaviest fire with indifference; he never surrenders except under bold assault, which he cannot withstand,—he cannot bear the cold steel.

That China was confronted with a dilemma from which there was no escape has long been seen. Two courses were open to her: either, as Prjevalski

says, to "plunge headlong into the vortex of absolute and complete reform and change in all branches of her institutions, social and political, or elect to remain under the dominion of all her old traditions, parrying as best she may the pressure of the Europeans." The second alternative, as was inevitable, failed irretrievably in China, as it had done in Siam. China attempted the impossible in trying to defend herself, not by reform and active measures for defence, but by playing off the mutual rivalries and adverse interests of the European Powers who threatened her—and therein lies a lesson for ourselves. Such a policy peculiarly commends itself to the crafty Chinaman, who, in the crooked paths of diplomacy, has little to learn.*

The eastern advance of Russia has been towards the Pacific, but that movement was always made with a main eye southwards on China,—on the rich plains, the commanding seaports, and the inexhaustible resources of her sleeping and unconscious neighbour. She has recently succeeded in taking, *per saltum*, a step of immense consequence towards the domination of China. The next move will be, there can be no doubt, the conquest of Chinese

* "Simulating where necessary liberalism; adopting in appearance the policy now of this, now of that Power, according as the one or the other coincided with her own immediate interests; fawning on the strong, and bullying the weak;—in a word, cleverly exploiting both friend and foe, while secretly laughing at both in her sleeve, China may yet continue for a long time to exist as an independent and self-sufficient Power; and, while extending this hypocritical policy to an indefinite extent, may very likely one day form for Europe a new 'Sick Man.'"—PRJEVALSKI.

Turkestan and Mongolia, for which purpose administrative steps have already been taken by Russia; and the process has been rendered immeasurably easier by the Russian occupation of the Liaotung Peninsula in southern Manchuria. It is not difficult to foresee what is about to occur in the near future. Following upon Chinese Mongolia and Turkestan will come Tibet; and this is a matter of real consequence for England as an Asiatic Power; for Lhassa is the spiritual centre of the Buddhist world, and it is from Lhassa that Mongolia, as well as Tibet, is politically controlled. That Russia recognises the importance of this question may be judged from the sacrifices she has made in studying the Tibetan borderlands. Year by year have Russian "scientific expeditions" persistently examined all the routes to Lhassa, whether from Kashgaria on the one hand, or western China on the other. Russia evidently means to reach Lhassa before Britain does. It is, perhaps, hopeless to expect a country that viewed with apathy and indifference the course of recent events in China to attach much importance to such a question as Tibet. No large trade is there in view, and few results could be shown to satisfy the political economist; but none the less will the domination of Tibet drive another nail into the coffin of China. Now that Russia is established in northern China, the control by Britain of Tibet and of south-western China is necessary for the protection of India and Burma on the one hand, and for the command of central China on the other. Not only

is China, who has proved herself unable to defend her own territory, quite unable to control Tibet, but there has already been danger to China herself from that quarter—a danger made clear by the fact that frontier Tibetans actually disputed with China, not long ago, terrritory lying to the east of their country. With Russia in command of Tibet, the danger, which under present circumstances is but slight, would at once assume an entirely different character.

Although the greater portion of the Mongolians have become degraded, there are still amongst them, especially the northern Mongols, tribes retaining some of the old spirit, and it is these and the people of Manchuria who will first be employed in China. Russians are never tired of being reminded by their military leaders and political writers that it was the Mongol hordes that overthrew the Roman Empire and carried devastation into the heart of India. Under Russian leadership, what may not be expected from the organisation, first of these tribes, and later of the Chinese, is their constant theme.

In view, then, of the enormous amount of work yet to be accomplished in the settlement of her vast territories, simultaneously with the laying down of a network of railway communications—not to speak of Mongolia and the extreme portion of northern China (of which Peking is the centre), to be dealt with later—the Russians were not altogether indisposed to see a powerful, accommodating and *safe* neighbour and friend in Europe

established in the Shantung Peninsula, conterminous with Russia, and committed, as they hoped, to support the Russian position against any one who would be likely to assail it. Russia, expert in putting a "face" on things, has also succeeded in placing China completely at her ease, while occupying her territories and war ports.

The combination at work in China takes the form, then, of a three-cornered pact,—China, Russia, and France—the last somewhat fidgety, doubtless; and to this pact Germany feels bound under existing circumstances to subscribe.* The French "sphere" —the South, with Yunnan and Szechuan as objectives—is not adversely affected, for none of the "spheres" of Russia, Germany, and France clash.† The time for the late *coup* was certainly well chosen, for neither Britain nor Japan was ready to oppose. The former was preoccupied in various parts of Africa and on the north-west frontier of India; the latter was seriously embarrassed financially, while her armament, which she is straining every nerve to complete, remained unfinished. Our rivals had diagnosed the situation. They had their plan and the machinery for carrying it out. And it was all done on the principle of *de l'audace et toujours de l'audace*, while they were themselves still in a weak position in the Far East.

* A well-known German statesman said in 1897: "Germany is ready to follow the English lead, but there is no English lead to follow."

† See Herr von Bülow's speech on February 7, 1898.

Presumably to inculcate philosophical resignation, we heard a good deal of the "favoured nation" formula being applied in China;—every fresh port was to be regarded as a "treaty port." But the doctrine has already been shown to be inapplicable in cases like Port Arthur and Talienwan. Could we claim equal rights either there or at Kiaochau, with "lease" and sovereign powers, with railways and mining rights, and hinterland under practically military control? It was asserted, too, that the value of Port Arthur and Talienwan was not great, and that Russia had not strengthened herself by going there. A dangerous delusion this to entertain! With a hinterland full of resources and with a splendid race of men, such as both possess, in the hands of protectionist Powers, the result is clear. Kiaochau and its hinterland were also pronounced valueless. One argument used to demonstrate how little could be done there is that Hongkong has made but little impression on the interior. But there we are merely on an island, on the very outer fringe, with no hinterland which we were determined, *coûte qui coûte*, to develop. With roads, railways, and mines systematically worked; with the back country, in fact, opened up, we shall soon have an object-lesson in Shantung as to the potential value of at least one part of China.*

* "When one considers how much energy is being displayed in mapping out and apportioning the waste places of the earth, and how much heat is occasionally evolved over some trifling piece of hinterland of no great value to any one, one wonders that the Far

And as to that of Manchuria, I never met in China any one of authority who entertained the slightest doubt on the subject. If the insular Englishman cannot realise its value, let him ask the opinion of some British Columbians, men of his own race inhabiting a similar country. There were people also, by the way, who thought British Columbia "worthless."

Recent events in China have, at least, done Britain one service: they have in some degree dispelled the mists which obscured the real China from our vision. If we have not yet made up our mind as to the policy that ought to be pursued, we begin at least to perceive what our interests are. It is now universally recognised that our interests are, so long as possible, "commercial, and not territorial," that all we claim is equal participation; and that we mean not to be excluded. We have at last got a definition of the "room for all" doctrine,

East claims so little of public attention in this country. For there we have not only enormous tracts of territory as yet almost undeveloped, as for instance great parts of Manchuria, Mongolia, and northern Corea, all white man's land and all capable of bearing rich harvests, but the whole of China proper is as yet unexploited by the engineer and the railway contractor. China is about the only part of the world where the engineer has not set foot, and yet there is no part of the world where his services are more needed or would be better rewarded. . . . These facts are, I think, much more clearly perceived on the continent of Europe, and it is not surprising that there should be an eagerness displayed among our commercial rivals to be the first in the field for the privilege of introducing into China the modern improvements of steam and electricity."—Mr. Consul-General Jamieson, *Address to London Chamber of Commerce*, October 1897.

which, admirable in the abstract, remains a mere empty formula unless followed up in practice. And to have the formula applied is what the country should insist on, leaving the Government to devise the special machinery for its accomplishment. That British policy has been lamentably invertebrate of late years, and will be again unless the country wakes up, is clear.* Not for the first time is it that something like a true perception of British interests has been reached, only to be followed by a relapse into the previous apathy. Macaulay's description of England's national character,—that she acts by fits and starts, collecting all her energy once in twenty years, and then falling back into the rich man's lassitude,—is too true. Britain should not adopt the Chinese idea of successful government,—*chih tsai pu wei*,—which may be freely rendered, "the secret of government is inaction." What has been and is still wanting is a vigorous but, above all, a sustained pursuit and defence of those interests. It is only because she has been neglected by Britain that China has yielded to the sustained pressure of Russia, just as Persia has done. Our treaties would have enabled us to perfectly safeguard and

* Not to mention Madagascar and Tunis, Siam furnishes an object-lesson apposite to this China question as regards the defence of our interests. There 87 per cent. of the shipping and twelve-thirteenths of the imports and exports are British. France had recently only one steamer running between Saigon and Bangkok. Yet our predominant interests did not ensure their defence, nor did forbearance secure immunity from attack. In Siam we had a simple problem—only France to face. In China we have a very different and infinitely more difficult question to deal with.

advance our interests, but we failed to give them practical effect. British enterprise has never, in fact, been supported as it should be since Palmerston's time.

The doctrine of "equal trade," as a principle to be fought for, is theoretically admirable from our point of view, but how about its application? If meaning anything, it involves our refusal to permit any foreign Power to acquire further territory unless it adopts "equal trade" in such territory,—even at the cost of war. Foreign Powers, seeing this, will negotiate and temporise with us in the future, as they have done in the past. They will promise, and they will respect their assurances just as long as it suits them,—no longer. They understand that for the present their distant possessions are far from secure; but ten years hence, even sooner, Russia at least will be independent of our sea power. She will then be invulnerable on land, while she will be much stronger for offence at sea.

Notwithstanding many warnings, England refused to recognise that "spheres of influence" were coming into operation. We had several important statements on this subject from France and Germany, and the more significant silence of Russia.* And "facts speak for themselves." Clearly this reliance on our *theo-*

* We had the statement of Herr von Bülow, "the spheres do not clash"; the significant reference of M. Decrais to Nanning and Talienwan, which turned out to be prophetic; and the utterance of M. Hanotaux as to the reservation of southern China for French exploitation.

retical treaty rights is completely illusory: it merely gives the Russian domination of China time to take root, for, since we so ostentatiously rely on verbal security, they are not likely to use the set form of words which might alarm us. They need not openly advance pretensions or formulate claims, yet may possess the substance while we please ourselves with the shadow. No sphere of influence which stops short of actual annexation could give the right to establish exclusive control, we were constantly assured. But the Russian "utilisation," not merely of Manchuria and Corea, but of northern China, will continue until the Tsar converts his present indefinite into a specific domination of China at and from Peking. The capital itself is disadvantageously situated. Formerly, having only to fear the incursions of the Mongols or the risings of the Chinese, it occupied a good strategic position, in the neighbourhood of the fortified mountains protecting it from the north-west, near the Grand Canal which carried its supplies, and not far from the Manchu tribes, who were ready, at a given signal, to come to the assistance of their menaced kinsmen. But to-day Peking and northern China are practially at the mercy of Russia, and will be completely so once Manchuria is fairly developed.

The one "ice-free [commercial] port" on the Pacific which might have contented Russia a year or two ago will not satisfy her now that she is in possession of Port Arthur and the Liaotung Peninsula. She wants all the ports and hinterlands, in

fact everything, in northern China and Corea, and after that the further steps are easy to foresee. Obviously, it was hopeless to try to arrest Russia by words and phrases. Paper concessions are no solid barrier; and the control of the sea-borne Customs, seemingly the alpha and omega of our policy, will be of little value if our influence on land is destroyed. Is trade not generated on land, and is not Russia in potential possession of the land?

In view, then, of the present position,—the movement of Russia in the north, and of France in the south, and now with Germany also established on the mainland between the two and flanking the Russian position; with a Russian system of railways * being pushed forward with feverish haste (the Siberian Railway† to be completed in four years,

* Plans for the construction of an important *through* line of railway from the frontiers of European Russia in the Ural to Tashkend in Central Asia are engaging the careful consideration of the St. Petersburg War Office. The existing Trans-Caspian Railway, when carried as far as Tashkend, is to be connected with the Trans-Siberian road. Two alternative routes have been surveyed, and are now under the consideration of the War Minister. One starts from Chelyabinsk—the point where the Trans-Siberian line begins—and runs by way of Troitzk, Nikolaievsk, Turgai, Turkestani, and Chimkend to Tashkend; the other makes a junction with the Siberian line at Ishim, and goes *viâ* Petro-Paulovsk, Kokchetov, Albasar, and Turkestani to Chimkend and Tashkend. This connecting line will be of great strategic value to Russia; it will enable her to send troops without break from Moscow and European Russia to Central Asia, and also allow men to be moved from Turkestan to Eastern Siberia and Manchuria, and *vice versâ*.

† The Siberian Railway is now open to Kansk, the distances being as follows:

and the Manchurian railways* in six); with Russian influence all-powerful at Peking, and dominating her working partner, practically a hostage to Russia,—what is to be done? After all, that is the crux of the whole problem.

It is useless for this country to talk of safeguarding our interests in the Far East if we are bent on empire-making in Central Africa. Its most sanguine advocates hope only to create in the Dark Continent another, an inferior, India,—*minus* the population and the civilisation. But the deadly climate and the status of the negro race preclude all idea of our ever founding such an empire. I am in favour of "white man's" countries, and also of purely trading markets, but Equatorial Africa promises neither.† Yet Britain thinks it good business to make railways to Uganda, while she has actually not seen her way to connect India and China, the

Moscow to Tcheliabinsk . . .	2058	versts
Tcheliabinsk to Krasnoiarsk . .	2037	,,
Krasnoiarsk to Kansk . . .	228	,,
Total . .	4323	,,

The line will be open to Irkutsk this autumn.

The Russians are confident that Peking will, one day, be theirs. "We will conquer China by railways," said a young Russian in my presence at Peking,—language constantly heard amongst Russians.

* See the admirable description of the Trans-Manchurian Railway, by the special correspondent of the *Times*, in the issue of March 7, 1898.

† We have heard a great deal of the creation of African dominions which "will form fresh markets for our British manufacturers, and new homes for our surplus population, whether the overflow proceed from the British Isles or from British India."

two most populous empires in the world. We have only a certain reserve fund to draw upon, and we have to choose between objects to which we shall apply it. Our enterprises in Central Africa are mainly territorial, the very elements of commerce in such a savage country being necessarily non-existent. So long as our resources, moral and material, are drained off to found an Equatorial African Empire, so long, in my opinion, will our substantial interests all over the world, but more especially in the Far East, be neglected. Presuming, however, as an absolute preliminary to effective action in China, that the country seriously means to devote to its interests in China a fair proportion of its attention, we have two agencies ready for use at our command, —financial resources and sea-power.

In certain critical situations,—such as the present, —we possess the power to assist China and lay down conditions, and the opportunity should be taken advantage of; but we must beware that we do not expend our resources merely to secure another creditor. To rely on diplomacy alone will be entirely futile, for our diplomacy, which has failed in the past, is not likely to alter for the better. We must make up our minds what we mean to strive for, and how we are going to get it. The old days of monopoly, when we "stumbled into success," are gone for ever, and we have entered upon an era of politico-commercial competition of a very fierce nature. The pursuit of trade and empire will not relax, but will increase, and we

must readjust our antiquated machinery, employing all the methods of modern education, modern discipline, and modern government. The line of conduct to be pursued by the mercantile maritime nations is clear. Their policy is to strengthen their position and influence at Peking, with a view to keeping open a market of three hundred and fifty millions ready for development, and towards that end to induce China—by pressure if necessary—to adopt measures which would be of advantage to all the world, including herself. The position is difficult, but it has to be faced. Foremost among these measures is the opening of the country to foreign enterprise and capital by means of communications, railways and waterways, for they are the necessary preliminaries to administrative reforms, which it is useless to attempt until efficient communications exist. These once established, administrative reforms will follow as a natural consequence. That China can have no insuperable objection to giving way on this question of internal communications is made clear by the concessions she has already granted to Russia for an immense network of railways within Chinese territory; the granting of similar railway rights even to France in the south; the arrangement made last year with a so-called "Belgian" syndicate for the Peking-Hankau line; the important railway and mining rights granted to Germany, and, quite recently, the concessions made in northern and central China. The Chinese have attempted to carry out railway

schemes without foreign control and by means of Chinese capital, and have failed completely. In the matter of mining enterprises the same may be said, though in a minor degree.

Now is the time to press on China a comprehensive policy of opening the country. In pressing such measures the mercantile Powers would be on solid ground, more especially if what was urged were not exclusive, but for the evident security of China and the prosperity of her entire foreign trade. The Chinese are, on their part, not unwilling to have a counterbalance pressed on them, but they must be strengthened and stiffened. No surer method of supporting China can be devised than the introduction of the capital of Britain, the United States, and Germany, the chief commercial nations of the world. Railways must connect our land-base, Burma, and our sea-base, Hongkong, with the Upper Yangtsze; for such a connection is necessary both for the safety of China and of India. The waterways must be opened by steam in every direction. The mines of central and southern China must be exploited. Capitalists, manufacturers, and merchants must be alert, and should be supported by their governments in every possible manner. The interest of our colonies in this question should by no means be overlooked. It is right that they should co-operate in the question of colonial defence, but in all Imperial concerns it is the mother-country that must lead. Should she not recognise her duty, it may be safely pre-

dicted that Australians and Canadians will yet bitterly resent the neglect of their obvious interests. Through Canada lies the all-British route to the Far East,* and the natural destiny of Australia, as of the United States, is to enjoy the freedom of the Pacific.† Our colonial kinsmen rightly look to us to see that the vast trading regions of China and Japan are kept open.

The general position with which we have to deal in its salient features is as follows:

A few years hence European Russia will be linked to the Pacific. Her Siberian and Manchurian provinces will be joined through southern Manchuria with the Liaotung Peninsula. The hinterland of that peninsula will be traversed by railways, its great mineral wealth will have entered upon the initial stage of development. The strategic positions,—Port Arthur, Talienwan, and Kinchau,—held by Russia, guarding this hinterland and com-

* In view of the European competition with ourselves in China and Japan our all-British service for mails, passengers, and samples *viâ* Canada should be boldly developed. The route is a great circle, in temperate regions, a short Atlantic link, a fast train link, and a ten days' Pacific voyage by the magnificent steamers of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company. A weekly and "first-class" service would be a powerful aid to our supremacy in the Far East.

† Amidst the uncertainties which are gathering round us at home, a future so obscure that the wisest men will least venture a conjecture what that future will be, it is something to have seen with our own eyes that there are other Englands besides the old one, where the race is thriving with all its ancient characteristics. . . . Let Fate do its worst, the family of Oceana is still growing, and will have a sovereign voice in the coming fortunes of mankind.—J. A. Froude, *Oceana*.

manding the inland Chinese waters, and dominating Peking and northern China absolutely, will have been completed. Corea will be held in a vice, to be dealt with later, Japan being meanwhile placated by an illusory free hand there, and being pushed southwards on the "room for both" theory. Germany will develop her hinterland from Kiao-chau, and, by reason of her position in Europe and in China, will be a hostage to fortune at that place, unless a fundamental change occurs bringing about an active working understanding between herself and England. France, in the south, the junior partner in the Franco-Russian alliance, will continue her political programme, which is to drive in a wedge,—not necessarily a territorial one,—between Burma and the Upper Yangtsze. She will also endeavour to hinder our connections, through the western and northern hinterlands of Hongkong, with Yunnan on the west and the Central Yangtsze on the north. Japan having come to an arrangement with Russia regarding Corea, has acquired a hold upon Fukien province, with aspirations to a hinterland for that province, encouraged always by Russia.

The next stage will be the Russian domination of Mongolia and, unless arrested by Britain, of Tibet also; and, should this come to pass, nothing can save north-western China down to the Yangtsze basin.

Under such circumstances it is a question of vital importance, a matter of life and death, for England

to maintain and consolidate herself absolutely in the Yangtsze basin, which cannot possibly be done except by an effective occupation of the Upper Yangtsze, and by developing in every possible way our communications, along that waterway, and by the West River, from Hongkong, and by railway connection between Upper Burma and, through that province, between India and Central China.

It is time that countries like England, the United States, Australasia, and Germany too, set themselves to study these Far Eastern movements. It would be well to reflect on the history of the ancient kingdoms formed by Genghiz and his successors, for history is repeating itself. Russia is conquering by modern methods the kingdom of Genghiz; and the Russian Tsar, once Emperor of China, will take the place of the Tartar conquerors who carried fire and sword throughout Europe and Eastern, Western, and Southern Asia.*

Let the mercantile nations be under no illusions. Should Russia be allowed to push her railways southwards through Manchuria and Mongolia, without a corresponding movement on the part of Britain in the south, we shall have lost our Chinese buffer; and, with the Russian frontiers conterminous with those of India, from the Upper Oxus to the Yangtsze basin, unless we have effec-

* Napoleon I., at St. Helena, speaking of dangers which menaced Europe by Russia, said: "Si un tsar, brave, hardi, doué de belles qualités, monte sur le trône Russe, il pourra conquérir toute l'Europe."

tively occupied and solidly established ourselves in south-western China, no Power will then be able to save India.

The scheme of universal empire may never reach its consummation. Gigantic bubbles of the Imperial order have ere now burst by their own expansion. Yet is there one element of endurance in the Russian dream which was wanting in those which have passed away into the vistas of history. It does not depend on the genius of one man, of an Alexander or a Napoleon; nor on the politics of one generation. Russian ambition is a permanent plant with its roots struck in the sentiments of over 100 millions of people. It requires no originality in statesmanship, but proceeds like a cosmic movement, by its own laws working automatically, the particular men who seem from time to time to be guiding it being but the accidents of the movement. Fast or slow makes no difference in the ultimate progress. Moreover, the Russian Empire is built territorially on more solid foundations than any other, ancient or modern. Every addition goes to enlarge its compact mass, leaving no interstice for hostile lodgment on its flanks. Nor need we search deeply into the history of nations to learn what advantages belong to the people who fight with their back to the north wind. To parley with such a force is like parleying with the tidal wave. Only a sea-wall of solid construction can set bounds to its inflow. The saying of Cobden, that we could crumple up Russia like a piece of

paper, has, like some other sayings of that earnest but ill-instructed man, fostered some costly delusions on the part of his countrymen; and there are still followers of his who are as deaf to the warnings of history, and as wilfully blind to the signs of the times, as those who married and gave in marriage in the time of Noah. It is not on their heads that the misery will fall, and it will be a poor consolation to their posterity to reflect that their fathers let in the flood, through attachment to opinions spun in the air, with a sovereign contempt for what was visible and tangible.

It has been shown what are the relative values of Manchuria, Mongolia and Tibet, as regards China Proper. If England means to hold her position,—which can only be accomplished by the same strong and resolute forward policy by which she attained it,—she would be wise to take up an impregnable position in Afghanistan, on the "defensive-offensive" principle, always keeping herself strong in India by means of a sufficiency of European troops, in case the overwhelming numbers of her Indian subjects may at some inconvenient moment be turned against her; she should prepare the needed bases of operations and lines of communication to counterbalance the great and growing Eastern menace.

For three hundred years we fought France, and built up our Empire in the process. And shall we not face Russia now, rather than allow ourselves to be first replaced by her in China and then engulfed in the resulting deluge? For, with China Russian,

Asia would soon be the Tsar's, and the whole world would in due course of time be subjugated by Russia. If Britain be but true to herself, and draw the Anglo-Teutonic races to her side, she has still the means of averting this danger, which threatens the whole of those races through the domination of the world by the Slav power.

"Since first the dominion of man was asserted over the ocean, three thrones, of mark beyond all others, have been set upon its sands: the thrones of Tyre, Venice, and England. Of the First of these great powers only the memory remains; of the Second, the ruin; the Third, which inherits their greatness, if it forget their example, may be led through prouder eminence to less pitied destruction."

RUSKIN

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Boy, a male personal attendant or general servant.

Cangue, or "wooden collar," the Chinese form of pillory, in which the neck and hands are confined.

Cash, the Chinese copper coin, with a square hole in the centre, used for stringing.

Cathay, the mediæval name for China.

Cattie, = $1\frac{1}{3}$ lbs.

Chifu, a prefect.

Chihtai, Governor-General, usually superintending the affairs of two provinces.

Chin Chin, commonly supposed to be a corruption of the Chinese sounds *Ching Ching*, now generally used by Europeans as a form of greeting.

Chop, a mark; term generally applied to a trade-mark and to a stamped official document.

Chün Chi, the Grand Council of State.

Chung T'ang, a Grand Secretary of State, of whom there are six.

Comprador, the chief Chinese employé in a foreign firm; the middleman between the firm and the Chinese.

Coolie, a labourer or porter.

Fan Kwei, "foreign devil," foreigner.

Fan tai, provincial treasurer.

Fêng shui, "wind and water," a system of geomancy.

Fu, a prefecture.

Futai, a governor of a province.

Ginseng, a root, greatly prized by the Chinese for medicinal purposes, found in Manchuria and imported from America.

Godown, a place for storing goods.

Haikwan, Chinese Maritime Customs, also applied to Hoppo.

Hanlin, the National Academy of Peking, admission to which is gained by competitive examination, conferring great distinction on those who are successful.

Ho, a river.

Hong, a mercantile firm, a building used as an office.

Hoppo, an official, usually a Palace favourite, appointed to certain provinces as head of the Native Maritime Customs.

Hsiang, a village.

Hsien, a district.

Hsiu tsai, first literary degree.

Hu, a lake.

Hui, a club or association.

Hui Hui, a Mohammedan.

Kiang, a river.

Kiao, a sect.

Kitai, the Russian name for China.

Kotow, literally "hitting the head on the ground," an act of prostration formerly demanded by the Chinese from foreign envoys.

Ku jen, second degree of literary rank.

Lamas, the Buddhist priests of Tibet, who live together in lama-series.

Li, a Chinese mile = $\frac{1}{3}$ of an English mile.

Likin, an inland tax, well known from its being imposed on foreign goods in transit.

Ling, a hill, peak, a pass.

Lingchi, the punishment of "slicing to death," inflicted on parricides and others.

Loess, called by the Chinese *hwang-tu*, a brownish-yellow earth, the chief physical characteristic of northern China.

Loti Shui, a terminal tax, imposed on goods arriving at their destination.

Mafu, horse-boy or groom.

Mandarin, a Chinese official.

Miaotzu, the aborigines of certain provinces.

Nei Ko, Grand Secretariat and Imperial Chancery.

Niê tai, provincial judge.

Pailau, commemorative gateway or arch.

Peking Gazette, the official gazette published at the capital.

Picul, = 133 lbs.

Pu, a Board of Government, of which there are six—Revenue, Rites, Civil Office, Punishment Works, and War.

Red Book, a quarterly publication containing the names, titles, salaries, &c., of all officials.

Samshu, Chinese spirits, distilled from rice or millet.
Shan, a mountain.
Sheng, a province.
Shihye, a secretary,—a great power in all yamens.
Squeeze, generic term for extortion,—official and otherwise.
Sycee, ingots of silver.
Ta Tsing Kwo, "great pure kingdom"—the Empire of China, the present dynasty being known as the *Ta Tsing*, or "great pure' dynasty.
Tael, $1\frac{1}{3}$ ounces of silver in weight; now about 3*s*. 4*d*. in value.
Tao, a circuit or group of departments.
Taotai, an intendant of circuit.
Tientzu, "Son of Heaven," the Emperor.
Tsinshih, third literary degree.
Tsung Tu, Governor-General, usually superintending the affairs of two provinces.
Tsungli Yamên, the bureau at the capital which is supposed to deal with foreign affairs; eight ministers belong to this board.
Yamên, an official residence.

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MANCHURIA

SKETCH MAP OF
MANCHURIA
and adjoining Countries.

English Miles
Russian Versts. 104·4 = 1 Degree
Chinese Li. 250 = 1 Degree

MANCHURIA
HE LUNG KIANG
KIRIN
SHENGKING
AMUR PROVINCE
MONGOLIA
KOREA
JAPAN SEA
SEA OF OKHOTSK
YELLOW SEA
GULF OF LIAO TUNG
KOREA BAY
GULF OF PE-CHIHLI
LESSER KINGAN RANGE
Kin gan Range
Vanda Range
Nadan-khatala alin Mts
Shan-alin Mts
Khorin Mts
Changpai-shan Mts
Nortoom-shan Mts
Kuba Mts
Imperial Highway
Great Wall of China
Part of Chihli
Broughton Bay
Peter the Great B.
VLADIVOSTOK
PEKING
MUKDEN
PETSUHAR
HARAROVKA
Blagoveschensk
Tsitsihar
Hailar
Aigun
Mergen
Sofiesk
Nikolayevsk
Dalai Nor
Kailar
Butha
Hulan
Pin-chou
Kuang-chi-cheng
A-shih-ho
Ning-yuan
Kai-ping
Ying-tse
Shan-hai-kwan
Ching-ping
Tien-tsin
Newchwang
Kirin
Ninguta
Hun-chun
Ussuri R.
Amur R.
Sungari R.
Yalu R.
Liao R.
Hun R.
Khanka L.
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Mt. Tsung-san
Mt. Paik-ta-san
Mt. Hien-fung 8114 F.
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NORTHERN
CHINA.
Compiled from the latest documents.
English Miles.
0 20 40 60 80 100 200
Capitals of Provinces ..... PAO-TING
Treaty Ports ..... Underlined.
Railways .....
MONGOLIA
ORDOS
PEKING
PAO-TING
TAI-YUEN
SIAN-FU
LAN-CHAU
KAI-FUNG
TSI NAN
GULF OF PE CHIH LI
YELLOW SEA
KOREA BAY
GULF OF LIAO TUNG
MUKDEN
PORT ARTHUR
Hoang ho or Yellow River
Grand Canal
Great Wall
In-shan Range
Lu-kwan-ling Mts
Tsin-ling Shan
Si-king-shan
Ala shan
Hoang ho
Liao ho
Yang tse (Port of Niu chwang)
Wei-hai-wei
Shan-tung Prom.
Chefoo
Chinkiang
Nanking
Shanghai
Ningpo
Foochow
Amoy
Swatow
Canton
Hong Kong
Macao
Kiao-chau Bay
Port Adams
Society Bay
Elliot Gr.
Blonde Is.
Staunton I.
Saddle I.
Flat I.
Miao tao Is
Chang shan I.
Ya-chau I.
Tolosan
Shara-muren
Kuitun
Bautu
Sorabsi
Tokto
Kir-nor
Angoli
Suan-hwa
Kal-gan
Kwei-hwa
Ning-hia
Kan-chau
Liang-chau
Kung-chang
Ping-liang
Kung-yang
Ping-yang
Tsao-chau
Wei-hwei
Yen-chau
Tai-an
Tsing-chau
Lai-chau
Chang-tsing
Ping-yin
Ping-tu
Ping-yuen
Ping-yi
Ping-lo
Ping-yang
Ping-ting
Ping-ho
Ping-kiang
Ping-yang
Ping-yao
Ping-shun
Ping-ting

CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN CHINA

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